



***MVHS Choral
Department
Handbook***

Mount Vernon High School

2014-2015

Handbook for Students and Parents

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2014-2015 Choir Calendar

Participation at all after-school rehearsals and concert is expected. See handbook for details and grading policy. The highlighted events are required.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
August 28, 2014	First Home Football Game vs. Edison (Madrigals Only) 7:00 p.m. call
September 2, 2014	First Day of School
5	Home Football Game vs. Herndon (Madrigals ONLY) 7:00 p.m. call
<i>8</i>	<i>Area Chorus Rehearsal (for 6th graders; HS students earn Letter Points for Mentoring these students!) 4-6:00p.m.</i>
<i>10</i>	<i>Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45</i>
12	Home Football Game vs. South County (Madrigals ONLY) 7:00 p.m. call – Military Night
<i>15</i>	<i>Area Chorus Rehearsal (for 6th graders; HS students earn Letter Points for Mentoring these students!) 4-6:00p.m.</i>
<i>22</i>	<i>Area Chorus Rehearsal 4-6 p.m.</i>
29	Student Holiday
<i>October 6</i>	<i>Area Chorus Rehearsal 4-6 p.m.</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>All Virginia Honors Chorus Auditions – Longwood University – Seniors ONLY</i>
13	Columbus Day Holiday
17	Home Football Game vs. Falls Church – Homecoming (Madrigals ONLY) 7:00 p.m. call
<i>20</i>	<i>Area Chorus Rehearsal 4-6 p.m.</i>
23	Fall Chorus Concert – All Chorus Members 6:00 Call/7:00 Performance
24	Home Football Game vs. Hayfield – Senior Night (Madrigals ONLY) 7:00 p.m. call
25	Photos at Mount Vernon Mansion (Madrigals and Mirage ONLY) 6:45 a.m.
<i>31</i>	<i>End of First Quarter – 2 Hr. Early Release</i>

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November 3-4	Teacher Workdays
8	District X Auditions – Mirage and Madrigals required – others may audition as desired. Points are given for auditioning and helping with logistics at the event.
11	Fairfax - Veterans Day Observance (Madrigals ONLY)
12	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
20-22	VMEA Music Conference- @ the Homestead - Mrs. Belzer Gone
26	2 Hr. Early Release
27-28	Thanksgiving
December 10	Women's Assn of NV – Terry Talisnik contact 703 569-9380
10	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
?	IKEBANA Club Holiday Luncheon – Mount Vernon C.C. (Madrigals ONLY)
?	Women's Club of Springfield – Holiday Program (Madrigals ONLY) 1:00-3:00
17	HOLIDAY CHORUS CONCERT – REQUIRED for ALL CHOIRS - 6:00 call
19	2 Hr. Early Release
22-January 2, 2015	Holidays
January 5, 2015	Back to School from Holidays
5-7	Mount Vernon Idol Auditions – Fund Raiser
8	Mount Vernon Idol Semi-Finals 7:00 p.m.
9	Mount Vernon Idol Finals 7:00 p.m.
13	Mount Vernon Electives Fair – all day – Field House
14	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
19	Student Holiday
29	2 Hr. Early Release (End of the First Semester and 2 nd Quarter)
January 30 –February 2	Teacher Workdays
11	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
12	All State Auditions (Juniors and Seniors Only) @ Hayfield Secondary ?(during rehearsals)

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12-14	All District Chorus @ Hayfield Secondary?
16	Student Holiday – George Washington’s Birthday
17	Assessment Choral Concert - REQUIRED for ALL CHOIRS - 6:00 call
21	District Choral Assessment – Edison High - School – Morning TBA
23	Set up for Pyramid Concert – Letter points available
24	Choral Pyramid Concert – Skinner Gymnasium – REQUIRED for ALL CHOIRS - 5:00 call
March 30-April 3	Spring Break
April 6	Student Holiday
April 15	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
16	End of 3 rd Quarter – 2 Hr. Early Release
16-19	Chorus Department Spring Trip to New York
17	Teacher Workday
23-25	All State Chorus (Fairfax County – Tyson’s)
May 13	Tri-M Honor Music Meeting 2:15-2:45 Choral Booster Meeting 6:45-7:45
18-21	Placement Auditions
22	Advanced Chorus Call Backs
25	Holiday
28	SPRING CHORUS CONCERT- REQUIRED for ALL CHOIRS - 6:00 call
June 14	Baccalaureate – Bethlehem Baptist Church (Madrigals and Mirage Only)
June 16	Graduation (Madrigals ONLY)
19	Last Day of School – 2 Hr. Early Release
<i>August 16-19, 2015</i>	<i>Madrigal Retreat Camp Highroad</i>
<i>August 19-22, 2015</i>	<i>Mirage Retreat Camp Highroad</i>

Blackboard

Detailed information about each class will be available on FCPS Blackboard 24/7.

Go to: <http://fcps.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>.

REMIND 101 App: Text to this number (484) 383-4699 according to your

class code: Madrigals = @mrsbelz Mirage = @mirag

Metamorphosis = @metamo Majestic Men = @majesticm

Mount Vernon Choral Boosters

All parents are invited to join the Mount Vernon Choral Boosters. For the latest information, visit Boosters' website at <http://mvhschoralboosters.com>

Students receive letter points for parent attendance and participation.

Concert Programming Philosophy

The MVHS choral program is intended to provide students with a well-rounded musical experience. The educational process of preparing a musical work for performance far outweighs any consideration given to the entertainment value of a selection. Concerts are planned to present a diverse selection of music for study and performance throughout the year.

Mount Vernon Choral Department Rehearsal and Performance Expectations

As a proud performer at Mount Vernon High School I will:

- Attend all scheduled after-school rehearsals and performances as indicated on the choral calendar.
 - Arrive on time and prepared for all daily class rehearsals, after school rehearsals, and performances.
 - I will not chew gum at any time while in the rehearsal room or performance space. I also understand that tongue studs are not allowed in any rehearsal or performance, and must be removed.
 - I will follow MVHS rules regarding hats, portable CD/DVD/MP3/Ipod players, cell phones, or beepers in rehearsal or the Little Theater. Electronic equipment will not be allowed during after school rehearsals and performances.
 - I will follow all rehearsal discipline procedures

- I will turn in field trip forms when due; pay all necessary fees, and be responsible for care of my music folder, music and materials. I understand that I am responsible for replacement of any lost or damaged music, folder or materials.
- I will arrange for the purchase of the required choral uniform and follow the dress code as indicated in the choral handbook.
- I will abide by all MVHS policies. I realize that when I am performing I represent my family, my peers, my school, and my community, as well as myself.

Performance Dress Code Policy

Specific uniforms have been selected for each ensemble to wear at scheduled performances. The intent of the uniform is to provide a standard group appearance that will enhance the presentation and performance of the choir.

Every member of the choir is expected to fully comply with the dress code. Those students unable to meet the requirements by performance time will not be allowed on stage to perform, and must attend the concert as an audience member. These students will have to make up the performance and they will be expected to write a review of the concert with all the other performers.

Uniforms will be purchased for the students by the choral department. Students/parents will be expected to reimburse the MVHS Choral Department with the appropriate amount for the uniform requirements for their chorus.

- **Student Responsibilities**

Students are responsible for keeping track of their individual uniform pieces and wearing them at each required performance. If a pearl necklace or a bow tie is lost, Mrs. Belzer must be notified immediately. The lost item will be reordered, and the student will have to pay for the replacement charge and shipping.

- **Special note regarding Men's Uniforms**

Black dress shoes: Black socks and black dress shoes are required, and are the responsibility of each singer.

- **Uniform Requirements for All Singers**
 - **Jewelry**

Only small stud pearl earrings (no hoops), 1 or 2 per ear, may be worn in concert. All other facial jewelry, including lip or mouth piercings, must be removed prior to arrival for the performance.
 - **Hair**

Students must be well groomed and presentable for performance. Hair colors not naturally occurring in human appearance (NO blue, pink, purple or orange) will need to be changed prior to the concert.

Grading Criteria

- **Daily Participation/Rehearsal Technique: 40%**

When you are absent from class you are responsible for making up the material and information that you missed. You will be held responsible for any written work that was done in class.
- **Performance Grades: 30%**

The dress rehearsal is given the same weight as the performance. Choral students are required to attend all scheduled concerts. Concert appearance is part of the grade. If you are out of uniform you will lose a letter grade for each missing part of the uniform.
- **Class Written Warm-ups or Quizzes: 20%**

Student's music literacy, comprehension and musical achievement will be assessed through exercises and quizzes. Written markings in the music which are given during class will periodically be checked for accuracy and given a grade.
- **The Final Exam: 10%**

The choral final exam counts 10% of the student's grade for the year. The final exam consists of a written exam, which will assess the student's knowledge and use of solfege, rhythmic notation, musical terminology, and music theory.
- **Late Assignment Policy:**
 - Assignments will have specific due dates that will be listed by the teacher on Blackboard.
 - Assignments not submitted by Close of Business (5:00 p.m.) of the due date shall be considered late.
 - Assignments turned in on the next class period (one day late) will receive a mark one grade lower than the assignment would have received based on its quality. (e.g. an assignment that would have received an "A" will now receive a "A-". Late assignments will continue to lose a letter grade for each subsequent class period.

- Assignments will be accepted for partial credit until the next progress report (or two weeks, whichever ever allows for the most time.)
- Assignments received four days late or until the next grading period will receive a 53%.
- Assignments that are not turned in by the next grading period (progress report) will remain with a 0% grade.
- Teachers will make every effort to notify parents via the NOTES section on iSiS that a student has missed a due date.
- When determining semester and final grades, grades will be calculated using percentages and quality points. The student will receive the higher grade.

MVHS Grading Policy

- ◇ Mt. Vernon High School has a consistent, school-wide policy stating that homework shall be no more than 10% of a student's grade.
- ◇ Mt. Vernon High School supports extra credit that is content-based only.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	4.0	C+	77-79	2.3
A-	90-92	3.7	C	73-76	2.0
B+	87-89	3.3	C-	70-72	1.7
B	83-86	3.0	D+	67-69	1.3
B-	80-82	2.7	D	64-66	1.0
		F	53-63	0.0	

Late work:

We expect that all students will complete all of their work one hundred percent of the time. Teachers expect students to complete and turn in assignments even if they are late. If work is late for any reason other than an excused absence, students have the opportunity to turn in late work for a half-letter grade or 3.33% deduction for each school day that it is late until the date set by the teacher prior to the end of the quarter or until the grade reaches 53% (F).

Late work interventions can include:

- ◇ After 2 assignments are missed in a bi-weekly period, the teacher will notify the parent via progress report, e-mail or phone call.
- ◇ When a pattern of missed assignments is observed, the teacher will contact his administrator and/or counselor for further intervention.

Re-Take Policy:

All students have the additional opportunity to show mastery of content through reassessments on the summative assessments given in each curricular area. In order for a reassessment to be provided, students are expected to complete all material related to the content of the unit as stipulated by the subject CLT. Additionally, students will need to demonstrate that they have completed all necessary preparation,

including homework and classwork, to be successful on a reassessment. The teachers in the CLTs will determine the additional preparation needed, which may include content review during Major Time or after school, test corrections, etc., and will communicate this information to the students.

Chorus Attendance Policy

- **FCPS Policy on Co-Curricular Activity Absenteeism**

Chorus is not an extracurricular activity like school athletics, where no grade or credit is given. Chorus is a co-curricular class, in which you are required to attend both in-school and after-school rehearsals and concerts. Your grade depends on attendance and participation in after-school rehearsals and performances. Conflicts should be addressed with Mrs. Belzer BEFORE the night of the concert. You will be earning points toward your letter each time you attend an after school rehearsal and participate appropriately.

- **General Expectations**

As a member of a performing ensemble, each student is expected to attend all class sessions and after school rehearsals and performances.

- **After School Rehearsals**

Rehearsals will start on time and finish on time. You must arrive on time and be ready to sing at the call time.

After school rehearsals are treated in the same manner as a regular class session. Attendance is required, and all FCPS regulations are in effect. Electronic devices will not be allowed during the rehearsal. Students are expected to place all activities and assignments in their school planner or calendar. Choir demands a team effort from each individual, and each student's participation affects the group performance. Each singer plays a valuable role in the process of rehearsing and preparing for a performance.

Whenever you are absent from a rehearsal, you miss valuable opportunities for musical growth, both individually and corporately with the ensemble. Attendance guidelines are important to support the learning process for both the individual and the ensemble. These guidelines help you gain self-discipline and time management skills.

- **Concerts and Other Performances**

You must arrive at the call time specified by the director. It is understood that extenuating circumstances may prevent a singer from attending a concert. In those RARE cases, the student must make up the event in the manner outlined in this handbook. A student may not participate in a concert if they are absent from school that day or are serving an "out of school" suspension.

Tardies and Absences

All students must adhere to the MVHS policy as discussed in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. Pre-arranged absences from rehearsals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Excused absences must be made up within a week of the student returning to school after the event they missed.
- Unexcused absences – students will have to consult with Mrs. Belzer for options. If the absence was NOT for an illness the student will need to make up the concert the next day they return to class.

All absences will be required to sing the concert by themselves on video tape for assessment by Mrs. Belzer. All students will also be required to write the concert critique with the rest of the class. If they miss class the day the video is viewed they will need to watch it and make up the written assignment before the next class period.

Financial Matters

- **Student Fees**
Chorus students are charged a fee of \$45.00 per school year to cover expenses for t-shirts, and educational and assessment software on a yearly subscription. (Uniform fees are separate and only cover uniform costs.) This fee is due by Friday, September 19, 2014. Checks should be made payable to MVHS Choral Department. This fee may be waived for students who demonstrate that they qualify for free or reduced lunch since the Federal Government will reimburse the Choral Department under the Equal Opportunity Act.
- **Financial Responsibilities**
Full payment is due to Mrs. Belzer by Friday, September 19, 2014. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Mrs. Belzer. Students cannot perform without the proper required concert attire. Fees that are not paid in a timely manner will go to the obligations list and must be paid before the student can participate in any other activity requiring a fee.
- **Uniform Fees vary** – please see the next two pages for specific costs for your student.

CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE PAYABLE TO:

MVHS Choral Department
8515 Old Mount Vernon Road
Alexandria, VA 22309-2067

Lettering in Choral Music

Any choral student may letter in music by earning 100 points. Details about how points are earned are listed below. Letter points do not carry over from year to year, but students are awarded extra points for consecutive years of participation.

All choral students are encouraged to maintain a high standard of excellence within the program. All choral students who accumulate 100 points or more per year through their efforts will earn a Mount Vernon Letter. If the student has already earned a MVHS music letter, they will receive a choral pin to add to their letter. A pin will be added for each consecutive year when the students earn 100 points. Points do not “roll-over”: every student starts at zero in September.

The following is a representative list of tasks through which choral students may earn their letter through chorus at Mount Vernon High School. Also, every hour of service to the choral department will earn them 2 points toward their letter.

Activity	Points
Attend choral retreat in August	20 points
District Choral Audition	10 points
District Choir Participation	30 points
Honor Choir Audition (Fall)	20 points
Honor Choir Participation	30 points
All State Chorus Audition (February)	10 points
All State Chorus Participation	30 points
2 or more consecutive years in chorus	10 points
Section Leader	10 points
Membership in more than one choir	10 points
Audition for solo in class	2 points

Perform a solo in concert	10 points
Student volunteer hours	2 points/hour
Regular Voice lessons	10 points
Regular Piano lessons	10 points
Audition for the Spring Musical	10 points
Participate in the School Spring Musical	30 points
Sing In Community Choir	10 points
Attend the Spring Choral Trip	10 points
Serve as an usher at concerts	2 points/hour
Membership in Tri-M Honor Music	10 points

BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE POLICY

Appropriate behavior is a vital component of student success. It is expected that all classroom and school rules be followed and that students come to class ready to participate with their binder, paper, pen or pencil and any other specified materials. **Disruptions during instructional time will not be tolerated.** In the event that a student does not come to class prepared or chooses to disrupt the learning process of other students, that student will be subject to consequences as mandated by the teacher and/or administrator.

Verbal Warning: the teacher will verbally alert the student to the classroom policy

Parent Call or Email: the teacher will contact parents.

***Detention/Parent Call or Email:** the teacher will assign a fifteen to thirty minute detention. The teacher will contact parents.

School referral (sub school)/Parent Call or Email: The teacher will phone/email home to alert parents of the disruption and consequences incurred. The teacher will write a referral to the appropriate sub-school administrator.

*Depending on the gravity of the disruption, the teacher may skip steps.

Major Bucks – This year, MVHS will be issuing Major Bucks to recognize and reward positive behavior. When a student demonstrates appropriate behavior during class, they may be rewarded with Major Bucks. These Major Bucks can be used to buy prizes and other cool stuff in the Major Buck Depot.

RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CHORAL DEPARTMENT

MOUNT VERNON CHORAL UNIFORM AGREEMENT

I have read the dress code policy for the MVHS Choral Department and understand that I am to wear y entire uniform at each concert performance.

I must also remove any facial jewelry before a performance. Failure to comply with the dress code may result in a “zero” participation grade.

Failure to pay for a uniform or portion of a uniform will result in the debt being turned over to the appropriate sub-school as an obligation for graduation and participation in school activities.

Circle the appropriate group:

MADRIGALS

MAJESTIC MEN’S CHORUS

MIRAGE ADVANCED WOMEN’S CHORUS

METAMORPHOSIS WOMEN’S CHOIR

PRINT Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

If you have any questions about the attendance policy, a grade, the choral calendar, or financial assistance, please do not hesitate to call or email:

Mrs. Judi Belzer

or

Mary Elizabeth Harrison Cunningham

703 619-3139

703 619-3302

jabelzer@fcps.edu

MEHarrisoncu@fcps.edu

RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CHORAL DEPARTMENT

PARENT AND STUDENT CONTRACT SIGNATURE FORM

As a singer in the MVHS Choral department, I will abide by all FCPS policies whenever I am involved with a choral activity, whether it is during school hours or after school hours, in the school or in the community on a field trip.

Please sign and return this page to the choral department by September 19, 2014.

	Student	Father	Mother
Last Name			
First Name			
Home Phone			
Cell Phone			
Email Address			
Home Address			

Choral Group: _____ Class Period: _____

We the undersigned, have received the choral handbook and calendar for the school year, read the contract, uniform and attendance and grading policy and agree to the conditions and regulations described therein.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CHORAL DEPARTMENT

Commitment Agreement for Mount Vernon High School Choirs

I, _____, having been selected to participate in the MOUNT VERNON HIGH SCHOOL CHORUSES as a member of the (List choir name) _____ for the current academic year, do hereby agree to the following conditions:

- I WILL ATTEND ALL REHEARSALS and PERFORMANCES, including spring, summer, winter, after school and evening, except in the event of illness, emergencies or other pre-arranged excuse.
- I WILL BE ON TIME! On time means in the room I am supposed to be in, seated or in place, and quietly waiting for my Director's instructions.
- I WILL follow all Rules and Regulations of the Choir and Mount Vernon High School as well as FCPS regulations.
- I WILL return any and all Choral Department Property upon the request of the Director, or designee, in good order – IMMEDIATELY upon request.
- I recognize I am an ambassador for Mount Vernon High School and my actions reflect on the choir, the entire school, and its student body. Therefore, I will display EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOR at all times, including:
 - A commitment to excellence
 - Cheerful cooperation
 - Respect for all members, teachers, volunteers, and guests, and
 - A polite, dignified and robust encouragement of my fellow performers in the Mount Vernon High School Choirs.
- I, and my parent/guardian, will pay fees noted on any bill or invoice received from the Director, within 30 days or as otherwise noted. I, and my parent/guardian, will pay any and all fees necessary to keep my student account at the level of \$0.00, or with money credited to my account.

We, the student and the parent/guardian, by signing this document, understand the conditions listed above and agree to follow them to the utmost of our ability.

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

P/G Signature: _____ Date _____

Madrigal Supplement to the Mount Vernon Choral Handbook 2014-2015



Judi Belzer

Director of Choirs

Mount Vernon High School

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Mrs. Mary Beth Harrison-Cunningham, Administrator

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Madrigal Expectations:

- Being a madrigal at Mount Vernon High School is a great honor and a privilege.
- Madrigals are expected to be models of positive and productive behavior in class and in the community.
- Continued participation from year to year is guaranteed by responsible participation in performances that are scheduled throughout the previous year, and by successful re-audition.
- Participation in Madrigals requires a large time commitment and leadership abilities. Many of our performances are scheduled at the last minute and require flexibility and commitment.
- Traditionally Madrigals sing at all home football games and students are expected to attend unless there is a previous unavoidable conflict. Students receive letter points for their participation.
- Madrigals are expected to attend a retreat in August to begin preparation for the following school year. This has been a four day, three night trip the third week in August in the past. The 2015 retreat is scheduled for August 16-19, 2015.

Uniforms:

Madrigals have several required uniforms.

1. Madrigals also wear Renaissance costumes that need to be close to traditional costumes. (Halloween type costumes do not hold up and do not prove to be good investments.) These costumes can be rented from school for **\$50.00** per year if one is available in an appropriate size. There are also several websites with costumes that are reasonably priced.
2. Madrigal t-shirts and khaki pants are required for football games and more casual performances. **(\$21.00)**
3. Madrigal Fleece jackets are required since we frequently sing outside in the fall and winter. These are embroidered with our logo and each student's name. The cost was **\$52.00** this year.
4. Madrigal Gentlemen are required to have black two button tuxedos for formal concerts.
 - The school has several available. These can also be rented for **\$50.00** per year. If the correct size is not available, Mrs. Belzer will purchase one for the student and the student will need to reimburse the department. Generally the total cost for the tuxedo and tuxedo shirt is \$111.00
 - Tuxedo shirts are purchased by the department and students are expected to reimburse the department for them. These shirts usually cost \$12.00.

- Cummerbunds and bow ties are also purchased for the students. The cost for these is **\$15.00**.
 - Men are also required to provide their own black dress shoes and black socks.
5. Madrigal Ladies are required to purchase a formal gown. These are purchased by the department and students are to reimburse the department. The cost for these dresses is **\$69.00**.
- Ladies are also expected to purchase their own black flat shoes without ornamentation.
 - Ladies should wear flesh tone stockings with these dresses.
 - Ladies should wear button pearl earrings. They may also wear a second earring as long as it is a post earring and smaller than the pearl. Students who have earned honor pins may wear them on their dresses. No other jewelry is allowed.
 - Hair color should be one that naturally occurs in Nature. Jello dyed hair is a distraction.
 - Tattoos should be covered
- Fees are due before the end of the first quarter. If there are financial difficulties, please see Mrs. Belzer to work out a payment plan. Unpaid debts will go on the obligations list.**

Parent Involvement

It is expected that parents will be actively involved in the chaperoning and transportation of Madrigals to their performances. Every family should be able to contribute time to drive or chaperone at least once a year.

Madrigals Measure for Measure Choir has 21 students. This requires at least five cars for transportation to our gigs. (Students are not allowed to drive themselves to events.) If we do not get enough seats for all the students, someone will have to miss the performance.

Please expect to help us with “out of school” events. These community events are what make us great ambassadors for our school.

Choral Boosters is also a very active group. Much of what the choral department does must be paid for through the choral boosters accounts. Please step up and help so that the kids can be more active and visible in the community.