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'That' Liberal Band gathers for a picture at Universal Studios in Orlando, Fla. 'That' Band performed at the theme park and enjoyed several days visiting some of the most popular attractions in Florida including DisneyWorld, the Naval Air Station Museum and more. The group also spent a day at Cocoa Beach in addition to visiting other tourist sites during the bus ride to Florida and back to Kansas.

'That' Liberal Band performs at Universal Studios in Orlando

EDITOR'S NOTE — The following is a first-hand account of 'That' Liberal Band's recent trip to Florida and was written by band parent Ron Davis and band student Sarah Davis.

Each year, 'That' Liberal Band plans a spring trip, and this year its focus was on DisneyWorld and Universal Studios in beautiful and sunny Orlando, Fla.

"The purpose of the spring band trip is to have great fun, to perform at a high level, and to gain educational insight along the way," band director Lance Burnett said.

On the morning of May 24, 72 band students and 21 chaperones departed from the Liberal High School parking lot with their sights set on Florida. After traveling for 24 hours, the band arrived in Mobile, Ala., where they visited the Battleship Parkway. On this scheduled rest stop, the band had the opportunity to visit the historic battleship USS Alabama. After taking pictures of this enormous war ship, the band hit the road again.

The next stop was Pensacola, Fla., where they visited the National Naval Air Station Museum. Band students got to enjoy the 150-plus aircraft on display and IMAX entertainment at the largest Naval Air Museum in the world.

After a 10-hour drive down the peninsula of Florida, the band arrived in Orlando at the Clarion Inn Lake Buena Vista where they would stay the next five nights. It was a welcomed relief for the weary travelers to get off the bus. After a good night's sleep, the band departed for DisneyWorld's Magic Kingdom at the Walt DisneyWorld Resort.



The students and chaperones had a blast on rides like the infamous Splash Mountain and were also able to see several Disney characters as well as enjoy the fireworks show and the spectacular lights castle show that celebrates the Magic of Disney.

Day 2 in Orlando consisted of a trip to Cocoa Beach where the band marveled at the beauty of the ocean and shopped at world famous Ron Jon's Surf Shop. After a trip back to the hotel to freshen up, they departed for Sleuth's Comedy Mystery Dinner Theater. The two-and-a-half hour show and dinner was filled with comedy and laughter as everyone assumed the role of detectives to solve the murder of one of the characters in the show.

On Wednesday, it was back to DisneyWorld for a day at Hollywood Studios. The band flocked

to thrill rides such as the Hollywood Tower of Terror and the Aerosmith-inspired Rockin' Rollercoaster. At the end of the night, an amphitheater nighttime extravaganza featured laser effects, music, video projected on water and fireworks collectively known as Fantasmic. The Fantasmic show entertained and amazed everyone.

At the crack of dawn Thursday morning, 'That' Liberal Band was off to perform at Universal Studios.

"This was a great honor, and the band was awarded with a plaque and free express passes to rides of their choice," Burnett said, adding that playing on the lagoon in front of the Hard Rock Café was "very special."

In spite of the heat 'That' Liberal Band's performance was nothing short of awesome!

After spending the day at Universal Studios, the band headed back to the hotel to rest up for their final day of adventure in Orlando. To wrap up the trip on Friday, students and chaperones spent the day at Universal Studios "Island of Adventure" featuring the fictional worlds of Jurassic Park and Harry Potter.

Everyone left the park together knowing we would cherish these memories forever.

On the long trip home, the band stopped in at a Vicksburg, Miss., rest stop to marvel over the mighty Mississippi River, but just for a short time, and we were on the road again.

As the buses made their way through Dallas, the band stopped one final time to shop and eat dinner at the fabulous Galleria Mall. Several band students tested the frozen waters at the ice skating arena that is the hub of the five story mall.

We left Saturday night and early Sunday, June 1. 'That' Band arrived back in Liberal after a nine-day trip through the South that they will never forget.

“LHS band students had great fun at DisneyWorld, Cocoa Beach, and at Universal Studios Orlando,” Burnett said. “ The educational stops at the Battleship Alabama and the National Naval Air Museum completed the trilogy in meaningful terms.”

‘That’ Liberal Band would like to thank all those in the community who supported us — the chaperones, the bus drivers who safely transported us to our many destinations, the Band Boosters and lastly, Mr. Lance Burnett who diligently leads and instructs students in the wonderful language of music.

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