

The Clark Fork Valley Press
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Ava Bouquet

Hot Springs Junior High School
Spotlight on the Arts – July 2022



"Spotlight the Arts" is a new feature, sponsored by the Paradise Center, which is designed to showcase the talents of Sanders County students participating in the arts. This article introduces Ava Bouquet of Hot Springs Junior High School. Ava is a musician who has just completed the seventh grade and who has studied with Ms. Bethany White since second grade.

Bouquet found an instant connection with her new music teacher when Ms. White joined the Hot Springs staff in 2016. Music class was all about singing at that grade level, but it wasn't very long before Ms. White started Bouquet in private violin instruction. By fifth grade, Bouquet was ready for band lessons when she chose to play the trumpet.

"I played the violin and I loved it," Bouquet said. "Then I started the trumpet and now it's my favorite instrument."

Hitting the high notes was the biggest challenge in learning the trumpet, but practice "makes perfect." White called Bouquet a "very talented musician who works *really hard*."

"I can give her a piece of high school level music and she'll nail it. I've never had a junior high student be able to do that."

Bouquet calls White her inspiration, calling her an "awesome teacher" who "knows so much stuff" like how to play all of the musical instruments. White, who holds a degree in music performance from Oklahoma Christian and a degree in music instruction from University of Montana, is leaving Hot Springs Schools to teach in Missoula next year, but Bouquet "will never forget the encouragement and support I got from her."

"Because of Ms. White's heart and passion for her job, she brought out the best in us. I'm sorry to see her go."

Music has always been important to Bouquet, but her favorite subjects are math and sciences. When in the fifth grade, she applied for Space Camp through the encouragement of her teacher Ericka Grieco. Grieco, a Montessori-trained instructor, identified Bouquet's strengths *in science* and predicted that she would be completing college-level math in high school. Even though Bouquet's mother felt a chance at Space Camp would be a long shot, Bouquet won her place at Camp and represented Montana in the national event in Huntsville, Alabama.

Because of Covid-19, the camp had to *be put on hold until last summer when* Bouquet finally had her first-ever plane trip for the opportunity of a life-time.

White pointed out that musicians share mental connections with math and science and while Bouquet may not pursue a career in music, playing an instrument is a really good hobby for a scientist or engineer to have. White shared stories of friends and classmates with jobs at NASA and similar positions

White called Bouquet "super respectful for her age" and "always willing to help other students" in band or in the classroom. "She'll always ace the playing test.

Other kids will go to her and ask her to show them what a piece of music is supposed to sound like. #

Although Bouquet can play many songs from memory, she enjoys the challenge of learning something new. "My favorite piece of music right now is 'Jurassic Park' and the solos I've done for concerts."

Bouquet laughed and offered a bit of advice for aspiring student musicians: Go for the trumpet; you get to annoy other people.