

Junior Annie Sinsel's bow slid knowingly across the strings, while her fingers skillfully pressed down on her violin, filling the air with its music, melodically weaving throughout the rest of the ensemble. The Strolling String's music brought smiles to the elderly faces of the audience at the Santa Marta retirement home.

Sinsel had been in Strolling Strings since freshman year. She started out terrified of the new experience, but then was adopted into the family.

"I love each and every single one of them, even the ones that I don't talk much to," Sinsel said. "I was home-schooled until freshman year [so] I had almost no friends at North, but Strolling took me in and made me who I am."

It all started 25 years ago with a phone call.

"I got a phone call saying that they wanted Strolling Strings and that they'd pay \$200," teacher Karen McGhee-Hensel said, "so I agreed."

Strolling Strings, circa 2014, boosted more than over 50 students and averaged almost two gigs per week.

"We get three to four calls a day," McGhee-Hensel said. "They call and I look at the calendar to say if we can or can't do [a gig]."

Strolling Strings had 20 performances just in the month of December. The 45-minute gigs were jam-packed with lots of singing and 40's music.

"With Strolling [performances], I feel nonchalant, happy, goofing around," Sinsel said. "I absolutely love it. The best part is the bus trips and the Snapchat wars."

Every three years, Strolling Strings went on a trip. In previous years, they had gone to Europe, Australia, and they went to Hawaii for the first time this year, costing \$3,500 to \$3,900 per person, with the opportunity to perform at several locations.

"We're performing on the USS [Battleship] Missouri in Pearl Harbor, at the Hawaiian Culture [Center]," McGhee-Hensel said, "and we have two performances in Honolulu at the Veterans' World War II museum."

Going to Hawaii gave Strolling Strings the chance to play for the veterans.

"We're going to visit a veterans' nursing home," senior Sarah Grandgenett said. "It'll be awesome to play for those guys."

Each performance was also a chance for the musicians to experience the history that took place with their own eyes.

“It'll be cool to see where Pearl Harbor took place,” junior Erin Klehm said. “It'll be sad, but interesting.”

On June 1st, Strolling Strings planned to arrive at the Honolulu International Airport. They were greeted with the Traditional Flower Lei and checked into their Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa with ocean view rooms.

“I'm looking forward to going to the beach,” Klehm said, “and hanging out with friends.”

Strolling also had the opportunity to sail on a Barefoot Beach Catamaran Cruise, shop, learn about Hawaiian culture, surf, do a scavenger hunt, kayak, snorkel, fish, volleyball, coconut weave, make leis, hike and more.

“Ideally,” Grandgenett said, “I want to learn how to hula.”