

Cassie Nicklen/News-Bulletin photo

MEMBERS of the New Mexico Special Orchestra play outside the Adelante thrift store in Belen. Two orchestra members have been chosen to represent the group at the Special Olympics World Games in Dublin, Ireland. Pictured from left, are Bryan Castleberry on drums, Director Gair Linhart on guitar and Cynthia Martinez on the violin.



Special Orchestra hits road to Ireland

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The New Mexico Special Orchestra has been invited to play at the 2003 Special Olympic World Games to be held in Dublin, Ireland, June 21 to 29.

During an interview Thursday, Director Gair Linhart said the Orchestra decided to send him and its founding member, Bryan Castleberry, to represent the group. Linhart and Castleberry will be sharing their music and techniques with an expected 7,000 special athletes, 50,000 spectators and 1,500 members of the news media, he said.

In addition to performing at the games, they will be taking approximately 500 copies of the soon-to-be-published *Special*

Orchestra Method and Songbook, which includes a play-along compact disc featuring photos and recordings of the New Mexico Special Orchestra.

The book includes instructions about what a special orchestra is, how to tune instruments so everyone plays in the same key, easy ways to lead such a group, sections on how to work with different instruments, how to promote the special musicians and a transposing chart.

According to Linhart, the books will be available at Mel's Music for \$5.

"Our main goal during the trip is to spread the concept of the special orchestra," Linhart said.

Castleberry and Linhart plan to distribute books and compact discs to each of the delegates so

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they can learn how to start and conduct a special orchestra.

According to Linhart, he and Castleberry plan to perform three songs the group has written, including "The New Mexico Waltz," "Special Orchestra Rap" and "Perfect Heaven."

In addition to performing and sharing their music with others, Linhart said, they will explore the "rich heritage" of Ireland.

Castleberry, who plays the drums and the guitar for the orchestra, said he is looking forward to the good time he will have during his trip with his mother and Linhart.

"I like to sing, and I also will be able to take off two weeks from work," Castleberry said.

Castleberry, who likes to perform the "New Mexico Waltz," explained that he would, along with Linhart, like to teach others how to start their own bands in addition to being able to play on their own.

However, Castleberry, who is an athlete himself and a participant in the New Mexico Special Olympics, said he cannot wait to see the track events and the soft-ball throw.

"I'm hoping to see the different types of things and people they have over there," Castleberry said.

The Special Orchestra trip is co-sponsored by Adelante Development Centers Inc., which made a \$1000 contribution for Castleberry's ticket, Linhart said.

According to Linhart, the World Olympics are providing them with free space at the games, but the group is raising money to pay for the rest of the trip.

People may make a tax-free contribution by mailing it to the orchestra at P.O. Box 26 La Joya 87028. For information, visit the www.specialorchestra.org or call 864-3749.