

Exhibit will reflect Halliburton's 'Journey'

■ Art, music and words will memorialize talented teen, boost foundation

By **Jim Kilpatrick**
Staff Writer

The ArtCentre of Plano will present the art, music and words of the late Grant Halliburton with the opening of "Journey" from 6 to 8 p.m. May 16 at the gallery, 1309 E. 15th Street.

"The title 'Journey' signifies many things," said Grant's mother Vanita Halliburton. "Not only Grant's artistic journey, but the continuation of that journey through his gifts of art, music and writing."

One of Halliburton's pieces of art was hung at his alma mater, Plano West Senior High School, on Tuesday. At that time, a \$1,000 scholarship was presented to a graduating senior.

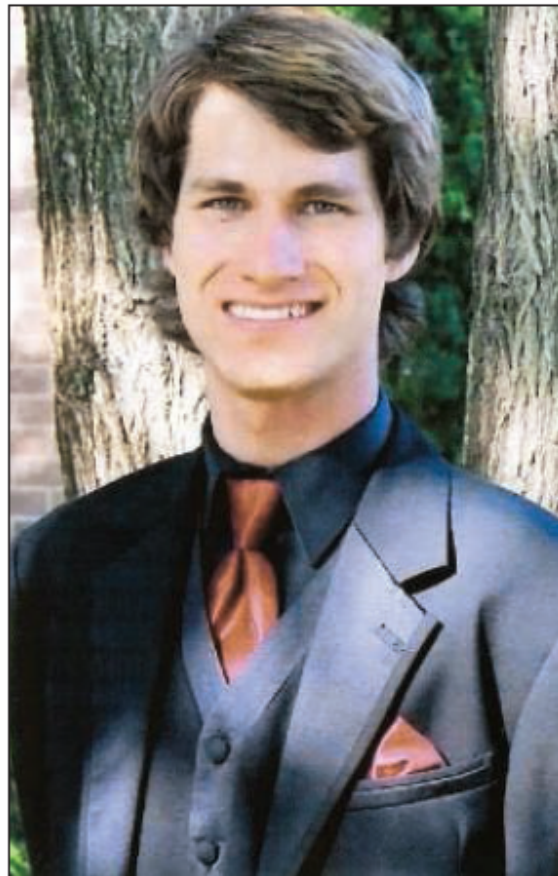
The exhibition is not just a premiere of the collected works of a talented young man who died last Nov. 2, but a way to generate awareness of the Grant Halliburton Foundation, which was co-founded by Vanita Halliburton and Allan Halliburton. The exhibition will also give the foundation an opportunity to show what it will be doing.

"I think it will be very interesting, not only as an art experience, but as a rare glimpse into the life of a very creative young man," Vanita Halliburton said. "Everyone that knew him loved him."

Everything to him was a canvas for him to create on, said his mother.

His creativity was natural, whether it was composing a song on the piano, playing the guitar, or

See **HALLIBURTON**, Page 7A



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Grant Halliburton's works will be on display at the ArtCentre of Plano beginning Tuesday.

Continued from Page 1A

sketching in a notebook, Vanita Halliburton said. He was always celebrating life.

"He expressed himself with such ease, whether through his writing, his music, his art or his love for people, that I often forgot how brilliant he was," said Amy Halliburton, Grant's sister. "His skill just flowed so naturally out of who he was. Talent, for Grant, was like breathing."

Halliburton's long-time friend, fellow Plano West 2005 graduate and music writing partner Taylor Webb, saw Halliburton's talent first-hand.

"Grant was an artist in the truest and most pure sense of the word. He didn't dabble in art or music," Webb said. "He had massively ambitious and visionary ideas about how he was going to change the art/music world, and he had the talent to do so."

The foundation was established soon after Halliburton's death. It has a twofold reason to exist. It is there to benefit young people in the arts and to promote mental health awareness and education.

There are also plans to announce an award Tuesday that will benefit art education programs, particularly those that serve underprivileged young people. At the same time, said Vanita Halliburton, the foundation will focus on breaking the silence that surrounds adolescent mental health issues and getting more help for young people, for families and for educators.

"What can a mother say about her son," said Vanita Halliburton. "He was a happy child; as a baby, he woke up smiling every morning."

Halliburton was a bolt of energy, but also the most gentle and loving spirit with a fierce, passionate love for friends and family, said his mother.

"From the time he could grasp a pencil, he was drawing and writing," she said. "He never stopped."

Halliburton died just six months after graduating from Plano West. His illness, however, began many years before that. His struggles with mental health issues began in his early teenage years.

"He had struggled with intermittent depression throughout the teenage years," Vanita Halliburton said. "However, in the last year of his life, it was clear

that there was a bigger battle going on."

He was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in September 2005 and spent a month in the hospital at his own request and it appeared that he was getting better.

"He was making plans for the future," Anita Halliburton said. "But the undertow of his illness was a powerful thing and I think in the end his pain was too great."

Grant Halliburton's suicide became part of the growing adolescent suicide rate that has tripled since 1960 and is now the third leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds, said Anita Halliburton.

"Grant's father and I fought long and hard for our son's health, for his well-being and for his life," she said. "We lost that fight, but now we are taking up the fight for other sons and daughters."

The foundation will seek to help young people who need to know they can ask for help and get it, for parents who need to know

how to get the right help for their children and for educators and counselors who need better training to recognize signs of distress in children.

**CONTACT STAFF WRITER JIM
KILPATRICK AT 972-398-4265 OR
JIM.KILPATRICK@SCNTX.COM.**