

{ MUSIC }

Tunes from all directions

Community Band of the Palouse's Christmas concert draws on many yuletide traditions

By CONOR GLEASON
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The Community Band of the Palouse, composed of Palouse-area musicians ranging from age 12 to 80, will perform its annual Christmas-Holiday Concert Tuesday at the Gladish Community and Cultural Center in Pullman.

This season's concert, "A Musical Sleighride," will highlight the journeys of three kings, as well as Santa Claus, and will include music from the Hanukkah season.

"It's devoted to music in different parts of the world," musical director Denise Snider said. "We're doing a couple songs from Hawaii and a selection that's from Scotland. We're also doing selections that recognize Santa Claus' journey on Christmas Eve."

Snider, an Air Force veteran who works for Washington State University school of music faculty, said the inspiration for a concert that features a variety of destinations came when she lived in Hawaii for three years and celebrated Christmas there.



BUILDING A BLEND OF MUSICAL STYLES – In this photo taken in June 2012, conductor Denise Snider leads the Community Band of the Palouse in a rehearsal in Pullman.

"I learned in Hawaii, you don't have to have snow to enjoy Christmas," Snider said.

Some of the songs that will be played serve as double entendres, Snider said, because they work in a Christmas concert, but also during other times of year.

"I picked one song because one of my old friends is the arranger," Snider said. "The song is called 'Come Fly With Me.' You can pair that up with some Santa Claus themes and have it be a Santa Claus song, even though it's not a Santa Claus song."

This year's concert will feature about 45 musicians, both young and old. Snider said it will consist of percussion and wind instruments, including flutes, clarinets, saxophones and trumpets, among others. Not only will there be an audience sing-along, but Snider said the concert will also highlight a few guests.

Elizabeth Hardyway is set to provide guest vocals for the Hawaiian Christmas song "Mele Kalikimaka," and Diane Worthy



Snider

will be the guest violinist.

With such a diverse age range, Snider said the biggest challenge she faces is making sure everybody feels good about playing the music while ensuring the audience is entertained.

"It's a musical balancing act," Snider said. "It's very challenging because you have to find something that's going to make every one feel like they accomplished something. Then

if you go

WHAT: "A Musical Sleighride"

WHEN: 7 p.m. Tuesday

WHERE: Gladish Community and Cultural Center, 115 N.W. State St., Pullman

COST: Free

there's the aspect of making sure you choose music that people are going to like to listen to."

Snider said this year's band includes middle school, semi-professional and retired musicians who've been playing their instruments for 70 years. She said the idea of a community band is perfect for the Palouse because of the amount of local talent.

"We have so many musical groups on the Palouse — from high schools to the universities and the Palouse Choral Society," Snider said. "They all have something that they do, and they're very good at it. It's a challenge of 'What can we do that's not going to cross over with what they do?'"

Snider said she encourages everybody to play music, saying it's good for people both physically and mentally.

"Everything about music, the science is now proving how good it is to engage in musical activities," she said.

Admission to the concert is free, and more information is available at the band's website, <http://palouseband.org>.