

A very Palouse Christmas

BY DUSTIN VANDEHOEF | Evergreen music reporter | Posted: Monday, December 15, 2014 5:00 am

Hints of classic holiday favorites rang above the discord as the men and women of the Community Band of the Palouse tuned their instruments in preparation for rehearsal.

The band members prepped for their free show, "A Musical Sleigh Ride," and everyone in the community is invited to attend when they go on stage at 7 p.m. tomorrow at the Gladish Community Center.

"This is our second Christmas concert in Gladish, and we hope to make it annual," said Denise Snider, the director of the band and a WSU music department adviser.

Dave Seamans, a French horn player and retired WSU professor, said the band usually puts on multiple shows a year and play at The Lentil Festival, before the fireworks on The Fourth of July, at the Moscow Farmer's market in the summer, and more.

Former Pullman High School Band Director Dana Cleveland started the Community Band of the Palouse in 1974, and Seamans said he joined shortly after.

"I love being a part of the band," Seamans said. "I get to be with my friends every week and play music."

The band usually plays together 10 months out of the year, taking breaks in January and February, he said.

Besides just playing in the Community Band of the Palouse, some members also perform in a German music group, Auf Gehts, which plays waltzes, polkas, schottisches, and marches.

"I call it eating-drinking-dancing music," Snider said.

Many members are there because they love to play their instruments and share their passion with the people around them, Snider said.

"Playing in the band keeps me tied to music and the community," said Mary Ullrich, who plays clarinet in the band.

Snider chose a wide selection of songs for the holiday concert and said she tried to pick both holiday



Community Band of the Palouse rehearsal photo

The Community Band of the Palouse rehearses for "A Musical Sleigh Ride," on Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2014.

favorites that audience members will enjoy and songs that represent the holiday season from around the world.

“Part of my inspiration was remembering that Christmas in Hawaii, with no snow, was just as pleasant as a traditional ‘White Christmas’ here on the continent,” Snider said.

Some of the tunes heard will include “Sleigh Ride,” “A Christmas Festival,” and “Songs of Aloha.”

“The ‘Sleigh Ride’ song is very fun. It just makes you want to dance,” Ullrich said.

The band will be joined onstage by vocalist Elizabeth Hardyway in the song “Mele Kalikimaka,” and by violinist Diane Worthey for “A Highland Christmas Fair.”

Snider said she's looking forward to ending 2014 on a high note.

"In this past year, we have had some great experiences with our audiences, and it just motivates us even more to keep doing what we're doing," she said.

Woodwind or percussion musicians who are interested in joining the Community Band of the Palouse can visit palouseband.org. It is recommended that musicians who audition have two years of experience in either high school or college bands.