

By Caitlyn McGoff

December 20, 2013 12:01AM

Roy Scott Big Band plays holiday music with a jazzy twist

One, two, one two three and the sounds of classic holiday favorites with a jazz makeover filled the Sharon Middle School auditorium.

The Roy Scott Big Band, a part of the Sharon Bands, performed their holiday concert during the winter wonderland of snow last Saturday, playing seasonal favorites such as “Jingle Bells” and “White Christmas.”

One, two, one two three and the sounds of classic holiday favorites with a jazz makeover filled the Sharon Middle School auditorium.

The Roy Scott Big Band, a part of the Sharon Bands, performed their holiday concert during the winter wonderland of snow last Saturday, playing seasonal favorites such as “Jingle Bells” and “White Christmas.”

“I think it’s nice that so many people came out,” alto sax player Glenn McGibbon said.

In the auditorium, listeners enjoyed the smooth brass interpretations giving a new edge to the songs playing every day this month on the radio. Conductor and Music Director Stephen Bell took a moment between each song to explain the origin of its arrangement, making sure to point out when the very familiar notes of a song such as “Feliz Navidad” would be heard.

McGibbon said that the group had developed a fan base from their largest annual event, the Jazzy Valentine.

Tickets to the Valentine, a themed dining and dancing event held each year around Feb. 14, were offered to attendees of the concert for a discounted price as a way to show appreciation for the fans. He also said that while the holiday concert is not performed every year, it varied between being a jazz performance and including the Sharon Concert Band as well, which many members of the Big Band also perform

“[The Holiday Concert] is a great show,” Angela Woodward, a member of the concert band watching from the audience, said. “I came out to support the jazz band.”

Woodward added that her young daughter Emelyn loved to dance and had enjoyed dancing to many of the songs performed.

While many of the arrangements provided a jazz twist on holiday favorites, some pieces also offered the opportunity for the audience to see music that was rarely performed because of its complexity. Bell explained that “The Nutcracker Suite,” by Tchaikovsky, Duke Ellington, and Billy Strayhorn required great playing from any jazz band.

“It’s great to have the right people here tonight to play it,” Bell said.

The piece, which included four jazz interpretations of four songs from “The Nutcracker,” conjured images of sugar plum fairies dancing throughout the space.



PHOTO/ WICKED LOCAL PHOTO/MARK THOMSON

Audrey Pearson plays the trumpet with the Roy Scott Big Band during the annual holiday concert at Sharon Middle School on Saturday, December 14.

McGibbon said that the band, which meets once a week to rehearse, was looking forward to adding the piece to their repertoire.

“We really wanted to do that Duke Ellington and Tchaikovsky, which was something our conductor really enjoys” he said. “It’s a lot of fun to play.”

Though he began playing the alto sax in fourth grade, McGibbon said that is not a professional player and does not often have a lot of time to spend with his instrument. Joining the band, he said that he is able to rehearse with fellow volunteer musicians like himself and have a great time.

“It’s great to learn. It’s great to have a night out,” he said. “It’s just really fun to play and to keep up with your instruments. It’s nice to flex your musical muscles.”

For more information on the Sharon Bands, visit sharonbands.org.
