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Making Senior Music

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The University of Dayton New Horizons Band program, one of about 150 senior music groups affiliated with the International New Horizons Music Association, will celebrate its 10th anniversary with a free concert, "For Seniors By Seniors," 7:30 p.m. Monday April 26, in Kennedy Union Ball Theatre on the University of Dayton campus.

The concert will feature a new piece, *Take Off*, composed for the band's anniversary by David Shaffer, internationally known composer of concert band music. His earlier work, *Freefall*, will also be featured; Shaffer will be guest conductor.

A parking permit is required and can be obtained at the main visitor center on the University circle or parking booth at Lot C on Evanston Avenue. For a campus map, visit <http://map.udayton.edu>.

Residents of local senior housing facilities and senior centers will be special guests. A reception will immediately follow the concert.

The concert and jazz bands total 65 players with an average age of 71 and include accomplished musicians as well as those picking up an instrument for the first time, said Linda Hartley, founder and conductor of the band and coordinator of music education at the University.

Though most of the band members have previous musical experience, that experience was typically in high school — for some, more than 50 years ago, she said.

"It's a re-entry point for those involved in music long ago or an entry point for those who would like to start," Hartley said. "They get better every week, even when they don't realize it."

Trumpet player Shirley Mullins said participating in the band offers an important opportunity.

"It's a beautiful thing," Mullins said. "People get old and think they can't do things — but they can. They just need the opportunity."

The band includes musicians with a variety of experiences including 90-year-old Walter Kaville, and three married couples: Bill and Shirley Mullins, long time teachers in the Yellow Springs schools; Ron and Jean Hartley, trumpet and French horn; and Dee and Larry Smith, percussion and tuba.

The University's department of music and the office of special programs and continuing education started the band in 2000 with eight members, Hartley said. It now includes concert and jazz bands as well as small ensembles.

Hartley said participation in musical activities provides many social, physical and psychological benefits including intellectual stimulation, relationship with past musical pursuits, reduction of depression and increased stimulation of the immune system as well as a way to find new meaning in life.

From May 16-19 the University of Dayton New Horizons Music Camp will host more than 80 senior band members from the United States and Canada.

For information on joining the New Horizons Band, contact Linda Hartley at 937-229-3232 or LHartley@udayton.edu.