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UD STUDENTS SET TO TAKE THE STAGE FOR 'SPRING STRING FLING' PERFORMANCES

DAYTON, Ohio — After six decades as a horn player, 72-year-old Bob Hunter of Piqua decided to switch to the viola — simply so he could form a trio with his daughter, a cellist, and granddaughter, who plays the violin.

Three years later, Bob is doing “pretty well” with his lessons, he says with a smile, and will join about a dozen other University of Dayton string students under the spotlight during the music department’s annual Spring String Fling, to be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14, in Sears Recital Hall in the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. Admission is free and open to the public.

Lyn Ritz, assistant professor of music who teaches violin and viola and coordinates the event each year, said the “Fling” is designed to give each student the opportunity to take the stage and perform as a soloist in front of an audience. All string students taking private lessons are invited to perform, and typically 10 to 15 do, most with piano accompaniment.

In addition to Ritz’s students, the program will also include viola students from the studio of Phillip Magnuson, professor of music; cellists who study with Jane Katsuyama, part-time instructor; violinists who study with Beth Sievers, part-time instructor; and guitar students from the studio of Jim McCutcheon, part-time instructor and UD artist-in-residence.

“This is a wonderful forum for the students to share what they have been practicing,” Ritz said. “Often there is great variety in the types of pieces performed because some students may have just begun lessons last fall, while others are seasoned players.”

The recital is open to both music and non-music majors. In preparation for the recital, students play their pieces every month in a master class where fellow students and teachers can comment on their progress.

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Ritz strongly encourages public attendance and said it has been good each year. "These students work very hard and look forward to playing for an appreciative audience."

Bob Hunter, who is studying through UD's continuing education senior fellow program for those 60 and older, concurs wholeheartedly. "This really is a good experience for us," he said. "After studying and practicing, you want to share what you've learned with others.

It gives you a sense of fulfillment. Besides," he added with a laugh, "I think we're all hams at heart, so it's also a lot of fun.

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For more information and media interviews, call **Lyn Ritz** at (937) 229-3917 and **Bob Hunter** at (937) 773-8458.