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College musicians usher in holidays

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Gainesville State College is doing its part to get area residents in the holiday mood.

College musicians and singers are set to perform in the 14th Annual Family Holiday Concert Monday and Tuesday in the Ed Cabell Theatre, which is located in the Continuing Education, Business Division and Performing Arts Center on Landrum Education Drive.

Both performances will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Monday is all instrumental, with the GSC Brass Ensemble, String Ensemble and Symphonic Band scheduled to perform.

Some of the pieces include French Christmas carols, "Greensleeves," "Sleigh Ride," selections from "The Nutcracker" and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," said David Thomas, assistant music professor and director of choral/vocal studies.

The GSC Chorale will perform Tuesday.

"We're doing a good number of (traditional) Christmas pieces, but we also have some new ones," Thomas said.

Selections include "Spanish Christmas Carol," "Winter Wonderland" and "Sleigh Ride."

Audience members might brush up on singing skills, as "we're going to have a holiday sing-along, so they'll get to sing some Christmas carols," Thomas said.

Special guests include Andrew Santander, music department head at GSC who will play piano, and an octet from a local group, Lanier Chamber Singers.

"We're going to finish with 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas,' " Thomas said.

Holiday festivities will continue on Dec. 8, as the GSC Chorale and members of the Brass Ensemble will join the choirs of Brenau University to present Daniel Pinkham's three-movement "Christmas Cantata."

Michelle Roueche, choir master at Brenau, will direct the performance, which is set for 8 p.m. in Brenau's Pearce Auditorium.

This will be the second annual Christmas collaboration of the two colleges.

"It's a nice thing because it lets the two schools do some things that they would not being able to do separately," Thomas said.

All the concerts are free, but seating is limited. Ed Cabell Theatre has 300 seats and Pearce has 750 seats.

Thomas said he believes that many people look forward to the holiday shows.

"We're hoping we have a really good turnout again," he said. "It's very important for the community to have Christmas start off right."

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