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SUBMITTED PHOTO

The Dukes of Swing, a group of professional musicians based in Aberdeen, Washington, will appear Saturday, Oct. 7, at a salute-to-veterans concert hosted by the Peninsula Association of Performing Artists at the Fort Columbia Theater in Chinook, Washington. notforsale

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visits to the Peninsula. "When they play 'In The Mood,' it's such a sound. It's awesome, with five saxes out front."

Cindy Flood, president of PAPA, has appeared in musicals with Babikoff for the past 10 years. She said the "salute to veterans" event is suitable for all ages. It runs 5 to 8 p.m., a time slot deliberately chosen so more mature audience members can enjoy it.

Several Peninsula restaurants are donating plates of hors d'oeuvres. Admission is by \$10 donation, and all funds raised will be presented to the Don R. Grable American Legion Post No. 48, which serves the Long Beach Peninsula.

"It is something that we feel we can do to give back to the community and our veterans," Flood said. "We put the chairs around the sides, the band is on stage, and there's room to dance, although that's optional."

Heart and soul

The Dukes of Swing is the band of the Elks Lodge No. 593 of Aberdeen, Washington. The group, which also performs jazz concerts, has opened for Manhattan Transfer and Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, as well as performing at last year's Washington Governor's Ball.

Leaders draw on the talents of Grays Harbor County and Olympia, Washington, musicians who want to continue long after their school band years. One original member, Bernie Edwards, who died last year, was still playing his tenor saxophone at 98. Norm Fosburg joined 60 years ago and still performs.

Director Dave McCrary, a longtime professional trumpet player, is a former music teacher at Elma High School just north of Pacific County; former director Bob Neisinger, who plays drums and sings, held a similar position in Raymond, Washington, in the 1960s. Both have been associated with music in the region for more than 50 years.

Neisinger, who joined the group in 1967, said that despite the emphasis in the past few decades on rock 'n roll and country music, most college and high school band repertoires include the big-band tunes that boosted morale during World War II.

"That was how they got through the war and kept their sense, because the music was happy," he said, enthused about the upcoming Peninsula show. "There's something about being part of an ensemble. Individually we wouldn't survive, but as part of a large group it's very rewarding."

Dukes of Swing per-

formers include their former students from the 1970s, something that delights McCrary, who still calls his protégés "good kids," even though they are long grown up. "It gives me a great sense of pride that they are able to play as professional musicians in the Dukes of Swing, because music is part of their heart and soul," he said.

A nod to the Duke

The group's roots go back to 1912 when the Aberdeen Elks Lodge formed an orchestra and later a marching band. The swing band was formed in 1948, and its musicians played at the fraternity's national conventions. The name Dukes of Swing was adopted a while later, in part as a tip of the hat to Duke Ellington. Classic tunes from the 1940s Big Band Era dominate the repertoire.

"The World War II generation is infatuated with the music of Glenn Miller and Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey and the Andrews Sisters," McCrary said. "We enjoy keeping that music alive, especially for the next generation who can hear how wonderful it is and learn to dance to it."

Like the PAPA hosts, the director is excited. "We always have a good turnout and we are appreciative that they keep inviting us back," he said. CW