
Southshore concert honors veterans

By **JEREMY D. BONFIGLIO**

HP Features Writer

BENTON HARBOR — For the past seven years, on the Sunday before Veterans Day, the Southshore Concert Band and its nearly 75 members have performed a patriotic concert in conjunction with

the Lest We Forget organization.

Today, however, when director Dale Reuss and his Southshore musicians step onto the mainstage at Lake Michigan College's Mendel Center, several people will be noticeably absent. That's because instead of the full

concert band, Reuss has culled 20 members from the rank and file to create the Southshore Big Band.

"This is a group we just started last year out of the concert band," Reuss says. "We put it together and did a

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couple of dances, and it was really fun. That's when I thought it would be perfect to do for one of these Lest We Forget programs."

Lest We Forget's annual veterans concert is a way for the organization to recognize area veterans for their service. Last year, special recognition was given to World War II veterans age 90 and older. There were 37 of these "senior" veterans in attendance. Lest We Forget will again be honoring these veterans with free concert tickets, special seating, and a group picture. Veterans of all conflicts will be recognized, along with a salute to each of the branches of the armed services.

"One of the trumpet players is going to be doing a solo version of the national anthem, which should be quite moving," Reuss says. "We're also going to be playing all the military themes and 'God Bless America.'"

Of course, having a big band on hand, the bulk of the concert will in fact offer the music most

IF YOU GO

► **WHAT:** Lest We Forget's "Sounds of Freedom" Concert with the Southshore Big Band

► **WHEN:** 2 p.m. today

► **WHERE:** Lake Michigan College Mendel Center, 2755 E. Napier Ave., Benton Harbor

► **HOW MUCH:** \$10-\$12, free for senior WWII veterans and children 17 and younger

► **CONTACT:** 927-1221 or www.lmcmainstage.org

► **ARTIST INFO:** southshoreconcertband.com and www.lestweforgetusa.org

associated with the 1940s.

"We're doing three 15-minute sets of big band music," Reuss says. "You'll hear music from Tommy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller and others."

A sampling of songs in the program includes "In the Mood," "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Star Dust," "String of Pearls," "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" and "April in Paris."

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