

Arts & Leisure

This 50-year celebration was worth the wait

REVIEWER'S CHAIR



Dave Eisenstadter

Postponed because of the ice storm, concert brings back holiday spirit

BY DAVE EISENSTADTER
Monadnock Ledger-Transcript Staff

After delaying the 50th anniversary Monadnock Chorus concert once for the ice storm, a second delay was out of the question, even as more than a foot of snow fell in Peterborough Sunday morning. But the skies cleared and the roads were plowed and by 3 p.m., the concert was ready to begin.

The event marked director Carroll Lehman's 20th year with the Monadnock Chorus and also his final one. For the program that would kick off

the last season before he retires, Lehman selected a "best of" from his conducting career titled "Choruses from the Great Choral Works." The audience was treated to Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Brahms and a host of other classical greats.

Sunday's concert was the first time I got to see Lehman in action, and I was impressed at his skilled conducting. His motions were clear, rhythmic and expressive, making it no wonder the chorus and orchestra were able to produce a lucid, unified sound. The chorus's range was evident in

the first two pieces after the intermission. Johann Sebastian Bach's "Jauchzet Frohlocket" from the Christmas Oratorio was wonderful, bouncy and cheery, while the next piece, Anton Dvorak's "Eja Mater" from Stabat Mater was dark and sad. This last piece fully displayed the chorus's deep, low and emotional power.

Giuseppe Verdi's "Triumphal March" from Aida closed the first half of the program, and it was phenomenal. The trumpet solos from orchestra members Jim Boccia and Janet



STAFF PHOTO BY DAVE EISENSTADTER

Monadnock Chorus members join with chorus alumni to sing the concert's final song, the Hallelujah Chorus, at the Town House on Sunday.



David Aimes has been the band director at ConVal High School for the past seven years.

The power of JAZZ

Regional benefit show brings students beyond the music

BY ANNIE CARD
For The Monadnock Ledger-Transcript

As 16-year-old Jasmine Rajaniemi hurried out of her coat and into the practice, she apologized to ConVal band director David Aimes. "I just got back from DCS. I thought I had more time."

Rajaniemi, a sophomore, had just finished visiting with her 7-year-old Little Sister at Dublin Consolidated School, where she spent time with a girl who is opening up her eyes to the power of music.

"We colored, and talked and ran around some. We talked a lot, which is funny because when we first met, she didn't talk at all. Now she talks all the time. We have so much fun," she said.

Rajaniemi has a busy schedule — one that includes preparation for Hot Jazz, a performance that features school bands from across the region. In its 25th year, it's held to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters.

This will be the second Hot Jazz concert for Rajaniemi, but her first as a volunteer in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

"The music is always amazing, and that's why it was important to me, but now it means more than just playing. Now I get that it's really benefiting kids. We're all really helping kids with this concert," she said.

Hot Jazz showcases 100-plus middle school

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PHOTOS BY ANNIE CARD

ConVal band members Jasmine Rajaniemi and Dylan Brown rehearse in preparation for Saturday's Hot Jazz show, which benefits Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Puzzles and greens for winter fun

This is a tough time of year for us gardeners — I don't know about you, but I go to the grocery store just to wander around in the produce section and admire all the greenery. The garden catalogs, stuffed with gorgeous photos of roses and lilies, arrive every day. It's ever-so-tempting to bring home a potted plant or a bunch of flowers.

Before you do, though, consider your animals' safety. There are a lot of common, popular plants that are toxic or even deadly to dogs and cats. Happily, there are plenty of pet-safe plants and flowers, including orchids, daisies and violets. Be wary of supermarket flowers, though. Commercially-grown flowers can harbor pesticide residues (some are grown overseas where pesticides and chemicals

CREATURE COMFORTS



Wendy Christensen

banned in the US are used) and the flowers are sometimes dyed to produce those bright, cheerful colors that are so attractive in January and February.

The National Animal Poison Control Center provides a list of toxic plants, defined as "plants that have been reported as having systemic effects on animals and/or intense effects on the gastrointestinal tract" at their web site (www.aspc.org/apcc). Click on "Toxic Plants." There's also a very informative video: Dr. Steven Hansen, a veterinary toxicologist, shows examples of the "Seventeen most toxic plants" — plants that should be forbidden in your home.

If you have cats, the worst offenders are those gorgeous lilies. Most kinds of lilies, including lily-of-the-valley are especially deadly to cats, and it only takes a few nibbles.

Lily toxicosis, which has no known antidote, can cause rapid, irreversible, kidney failure and death in cats. Dogs aren't affected, though — no one knows why.

Cats, in general, are sensible snackers. When out and about outdoors in nice weather, they often like to nibble on grasses and other plants, but are unlikely to chow down on anything deadly. Indoor cats, though, and cats confined indoors in frigid weather, are a different story. As every owner of indoor kitties knows, cats absolutely *must* examine and approve every item that comes in from outdoors, or is new in the house — from your shoes, to a bag of groceries to that lovely potted plant or bunch of flowers you found at the market. It's the novelty of indoor greenery that can

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arts auction

<p>Opening Reception Mon. Feb. 2 5:00-8:00 p.m. Jaffrey Civic Center</p> <p>Silent Auction Feb. 3-6 - 11:00-7:00 Feb. 7 - 9:00-Noon Jaffrey Civic Center</p> <p><small>Sponsored by:</small> JAFFREY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE For more info call 532-4549</p>	<p>Live Auction Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009 Noone Falls, Peterborough 6:00 p.m. Champagne, beer, wine & gourmet hors d'oeuvres included in ticket price 7:30 p.m. Bidding begins</p> <p>Tickets: \$40/pp in advance • \$50/pp at the door</p> <p><small>Available at:</small> The Jaffrey Chamber of Commerce, Steeles and the Sharon Arts Gallery in Peterborough</p> <p><i>Black tie optional</i></p>
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