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Free concerts return to WKU

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Sounds of trumpets, flutes and drums will mark the return of the Southern Kentucky Concert Band to Western Kentucky University.

The Southern Kentucky Concert Band, which works with a variety of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments, will perform two free concerts at the Downing Student Union auditorium in July.

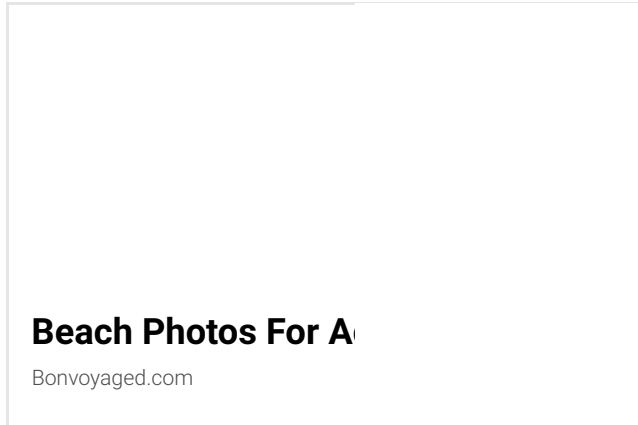
The first concert is planned for 5 p.m. Saturday and is called “Happy Birthday America!”

The hour-long show is devoted to Independence Day and will include songs like “The Stars and Stripes Forever,” “When Johnny Comes Marching Home” and other patriotic compositions.

Gary Schallert, WKU director of bands, said this concert is a way of supporting and expressing gratitude to veterans.

“We want to encourage people to come out and celebrate,” he said.

The second concert, which will take place on July 24, goes by the name “That’s Entertainment.” It will involve renditions of songs from different movies, Broadway shows, operas and sports. “That’s Entertainment” will also feature a vocalist and WKU professor Wayne Pope.



Schallert said this concert will include “a great variety of music” and should be “very cool.”

The Southern Kentucky Concert Band previously played annual “Twilight” concerts. The streak had to be broken in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, only two concerts will be played instead of four as in the Twilight series.

Schallert said having a weekly concert involves some challenges.

For that reason, Schallert and Matthew McCurry, associate director of bands at WKU, decided to reduce the number of concerts to increase the number of rehearsals,

according to Schallert.

“This will allow the band to have a little more polished performance,” he said.

Schallert said he is “very excited” about the upcoming concerts as he sees them as “a great opportunity” for amateur and professional musicians to perform.

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