

High Plains Jazz scheduled to take stage in Holyoke

Written by Chris Lee

Jazz music will fill the auditorium at Holyoke High School Sunday, Feb. 20 when High Plains Jazz takes the stage as part of the Phillips County Arts Council 2010-11 season.

High Plains Jazz is a mix of talent from different aspects of the jazz spectrum. Joe Hall, who moved to Holyoke with his wife Kris Fulscher in 2009, will perform lead vocals. Ron Jolly will play piano, Charley Smith trumpet, Jack LaForte tenor saxophone, Todd Reid drums and Joe Lopez bass.

Before moving to Holyoke, Hall was involved with The Hot Tomatoes Dance Orchestra, a jazz group based out of Denver. He spent 23 years with the band but was forced to leave the group when he moved to Holyoke.

LaForte, Smith and Lopez are all current members of The Hot Tomatoes. High Plains Jazz is a name Hall gave the group he has assembled for the concert scheduled from 2-4 p.m. Feb. 20 at HHS.

Hall said it's easy for jazz musicians to come together and play a concert. The music is known by all the musicians and in fact very rarely are music charts used.

Hall said he will talk sparingly with the audience throughout the show about the history of jazz music.

The group will play some early traditional or dixieland jazz to begin with and transition into a little more standard jazz.

The Hot Tomatoes play a lot of big band style songs which should carry over to the High Plains Jazz concert, according to Hall.