

Out & About

A weekly guide of things to do



Members of the De Ritter Quintet include front row (front, from left) Bill Hughey on keyboard and vocals; Paul De Ritter on trumpet, flugelhorn, cornet, pocket trumpet and vocals; (back from left) Jim Lapallo on soprano and tenor saxophone; Lloyd Howard on bass; and George Bush on drums.



Paul De Ritter with four of the horns he plays in concerts throughout the region. Photos submitted

De Ritter jazz bands can change to suit venues, budgets

(They can also play whatever it is you want to hear)

By Chuck Massaro
Olean Times Herald

OLEAN □ Paul De Ritter loves playing music. Loves talking about playing music. Loves to see people smiling and tapping their feet while he's playing.

Getting paid to play is cool, too. It enables him and his bandmates to continue performing. But what he seems to love most is connecting to people.

□ I love that we're doing something that makes people feel good. It's fulfilling to see someone mouthing the words to what we're playing; I love that connection with people. And playing with other humans can at times be an almost magical experience. It's beautiful. □

De Ritter and his bandmates bring to mind the musical equivalent of The Transformers. They can be just about any size you need them to be. Need a big band sound for a company party or wedding? The De Ritter Quintet will be there. Your budget or the physical space of the venue calls for less? Then you've got the De Ritter Duo/Quartet, Trio, or Duo to choose from. The De Ritter Duo/Quintet □ that's the generic way of referring to all the De Ritter combos □ has played for groups of 20 people and they've played before 650, Mr. De Ritter said.

The bands' flexibility also shows up in their repertoire.

□ We'll play a room and I'll pass out laminated copies of our repertoire of more than 200

More De Ritter info

□ Music fans who would like to get onto the De Ritter Duo/Quintet's e-mail list to find out when the bands are playing may do so by sending their names and e-mail address to pderitter@yahoo.com.

They may also find out more about the musicians at www.paulderitter.com

.....
The next shows featuring the De Ritter Duo/Quintet are:

- Oct. 17, Paul De Ritter Quartet, American Legion, Olean, 8 p.m. to midnight.
- Oct. 25, Paul De Ritter Duo, Bistro 188, Olean, 6 to 9 p.m.

songs and ask people to submit requests, □ he said. □ That way we know we're playing the songs they want to hear. □

Audience members have plenty to choose from when the De Ritter Duo/Quintet performs. While they concentrate on jazz and big band music from the period of the □30s through the □60s, the band will go back to Dixieland or turn to modern popular songs in order to play what the people want. Mr. De Ritter said the songs that come to mind as the most-often-asked-for include Frank Sinatra tunes, modern songs like

Billy Joel's □ Piano Man □ and the big band favorite □ In The Mood. □

While Mr. De Ritter has played other styles of music □ he grew up in a church music family in Patterson, N.J., and played Top 40 music on weekends for a quarter of a century □ he concentrates on jazz nowadays. When he's booking gigs for his bands, he lets people know up front that they won't hear rock or country from the De Ritter Duo/Quartet.

Mr. De Ritter was a music teacher in the Franklinville Central School District for 33 years. He also taught part-time in Smethport, Pa. He is retired now. He earned a bachelor of music degree from Houghton College and a master's degree from the State University of New York at Fredonia. In addition to his jazz groups, Mr. De Ritter also performs with the International Championship American Legion Band of the Tonawandas, the Buffalo Silver Band, the Joe Baudo Big Band at the Colored Musicians' Club of Buffalo and the Quaker Tones of Orchard Park.

He used to play in Hits and A Miss, the Olean band run by Tom Michienzi, □ one of the finest human beings □ Mr. De Ritter has known. But it was an invitation to play in a Dixieland band □ with extremely good musicians □ at Lake Chautauqua a few years ago that had him veering toward an active jazz career.

□ The fellow who asked me to sit in called me

Please see De Ritter on page B-11