With outside temperatures hovering near the 0-degree mark, Holyoke school bands warmed the hearts of concert-goers at the Monday, Dec. 15 Sounds of Christmas performance.

From the brand-new fifth grade students who have just learned their instruments this year to the seasoned HHS concert band, the music was upbeat.

Under the direction of Pat Wiebers, the concert featured fifth grade, sixth grade, junior high, high school and jazz bands.

Jazz band opened the concert program Monday with Silent Night, featuring soloists Taylor Haidle on trumpet, Rachel Schneider on trombone and Nicole Brandt on alto sax.

Erin Vieselmeyer and Lindsay Helgoth performed a tenor sax duet and Krista Schafer a trumpet solo for A Big Band Christmas II, and Rock on Merry Gents highlighted Duncan Brandt on bass guitar and Nicole Brandt on alto sax.

Sixth graders performed First Rockin' Christmas, The Simple Gifts of Christmas, Santa Comes Marching In, Turbo Rock and Jammin' on the Rooftop.

Christmas Concerto was first up for the seventh and eighth grade band. Soloists were Elissa Baker, Jacinda Krueger, Shaylee Krueger and Ashley Humphreys on flute; Lindsay Helgoth and Erin Viesel-meyer on tenor sax; Camille Elliott on bassoon; Molly Brandt on bass clarinet; Eva Penzing on clarinet; and Ryan Krogmeier on trumpet.

The Runaway Sleigh included bass clarinet soloist Molly Brandt, and Silent Night was a beautiful flute quartet made up of Elissa Baker, Ashley Humphreys, Shay-lee Krueger and Jacinda Krueger.

The JH band also performed Pachelbel's Christmas and Jingle Bell Rock.

Fifth graders played numerous ditties for beginning band members, including a rhythm rap in which they clapped out the beat. They closed their portion of the program with Jolly Old St. Nicholas and Jingle Bells.

All led up to the seasoned performers when the high school concert band took the stage. They opened with Of Kings and Christmas.

Christmas Favorites included Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, A Holly Jolly Christmas and I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day with LeAnne McWilliams on flute, Nicole Brandt on alto sax and Ella Stewart on tenor sax.

The group closed with Still, Still, Still and Brighter Side of Christmas.

A Tree of Lights ceremony by Hospice of the Plains volunteer Eileen Moss opened Monday's concert. She honored Hospice care recipient Marie Schlachter, as well as her parents Luke and Shannon and sister Josie, and dedicated the 2008 Tree of Lights to Marie.