

MARCH

2021 ISSUE



NPS

NORTH PORT SYMPHONY

— FOR THE LOVE OF MUSIC —

MONTHLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

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Dear North Port Symphony patrons,
As we await our in-person concerts next year, we are instituting a monthly newsletter to update you on symphony news. In addition, we hope to maintain our community-rooted background by sharing moments from our almost four-decade history and musicians' biographies. We wish you a happy March and hope this little bit of familiarity will bring you comfort.

MUSICIAN MONDAYS - BEHIND THE INSTRUMENT

What started as an initiative to keep our social media platforms active, Musician Mondays has become a weekly glimpse into the heart of our symphony. Each week, a symphony member is spotlighted on our Facebook and Instagram accounts. Long-time players and new musicians alike relate their love of our symphony and the joy they experience playing for our audiences. Each week, we thank these sharers of music by sharing their stories with you.

To read more musician bios, visit
northportsymphony.com/symphony-news

TIMOTHY SWANSON

NORTH PORT SYMPHONY PRESIDENT
CELLIST



My name is Tim Swanson. I play the cello and am the current President of the North Port Symphony Orchestra. I joined the N.P.S. in 2015 after retiring and spending my winters here in North Port. I began playing the cello when I was in the fourth grade. I had asked my parents if I could play the drums but they strongly recommended the cello, and the rest is, as they say, history. I started on the piano at age 5 which certainly helped me learn the cello more easily. I've now been playing for approximately 57 years. My father enjoyed singing, so music was always part of our family. My mother posted the words to church hymns over the kitchen sink and encouraged us four boys to sing while we washed and dried dishes. My middle and high school years were filled with choir and orchestra classes. In middle school, I was fortunate to win a scholarship to attend a two-week program at the Interlochen Music Camp in Michigan. This is when I really began to get serious about the cello. I thoroughly enjoy playing with the N.P.S. orchestra. Maestro Romanski constantly challenges us with a variety of interesting music; to participate with such a fine group of musicians is truly a joy for me. I'm sure I speak for all orchestra members when I say how anxious we are to once again resume practicing and performing for all those who continue to support the North Port Symphony.

JAMES PACK

PRINCIPAL TROMBONIST

I'm James Pack and I play principal trombone. I have been in the North Port Symphony since January of 2008. I have been playing for fifty-four years. I started on Tuba in 7th grade. The band director, Jim Hill (Shenandoah Jr High in Miami) told me I would get a D if I didn't change instruments for the next semester. So, I picked up a baritone horn and started playing that. I noticed that the trombone players who sat next to me used the same mouthpiece so I started playing trombone as well. I took my horn home every day on the city bus and practiced to catch up. The next year, Mr. Hill put me in the top band and made me one of his 3 soloists. I found that regular practice was the key to playing well and I seemed to have a knack for playing music. I kept practicing, even over the summer. Two years later I was 1st chair euphonium at Coral Gables SHS [Senior High School] and by my Sr year, was playing in the Symphonic Band, Orchestra, All Miami Youth Symphony, a community college Wind Ensemble (don't remember the name), and played a few gigs with the University of Miami Wind Ensemble. I won all Superiors in my State Contest solos for the 3 years I was in high school and was 2nd chair at the Florida State Band Contest 1972. At FSU, I was a section leader in the Marching Chiefs and the principal euphonium for 4 years in the FSU Wind Ensemble. I played trombone and bass trombone in the FSU Jazz Band. I went into the Air Force as a pilot, but managed to keep playing, eventually joining numerous community concert bands, wind ensembles, orchestras, and big bands. I played with the Jacksonville Wind Ensemble, Coastal Symphony of Georgia, Highlandaires Big Band, Jekyll Island Big Band, Gerry White Big Band, and many others. I'm currently the principal trombone for the North Port Symphony and I play euphonium in the Venice Concert Band, Suncoast Swing Band and I have my own band - a German-style, 5 piece professional group that plays for Oktoberfests.



JAMES PACK, CONTINUED

I thought it would be more fun to play a horn instead of going to math or history classes. It's also taken me to different parts of the world as well. My high school band was chosen by the US State Department to travel to Columbia, South America for 2 weeks and play concerts all over the country. FSU was chosen by the US State Department to travel to Syria in 1974 to play concerts at the Azhem Palace in Damascus, Big Band concerts in Lebanon, and a command marching performance for King Hussein of Jordan with the Royal Jordanian Marching Band. Needless to say, I really love playing! I enjoy playing in the North Port Symphony because we have a great maestro and play challenging music. It's probably the best, most talented band I play in and well worth the hours spent practicing. You see, musicians who work hard get rewarded by presenting a great concert for an audience. Their applause and appreciation are all worth it. I feel great when my hard work (and the hard work of the other musicians) pays off and we're appreciated for playing a great concert by a large group of discerning. When the music is a challenge, the musicians rise to the occasion; the group sounds good and musicians get better and more confident. The next concert is harder still, but players continue to get better. It's the best group to play in!

SUSAN AARON - OBOIST

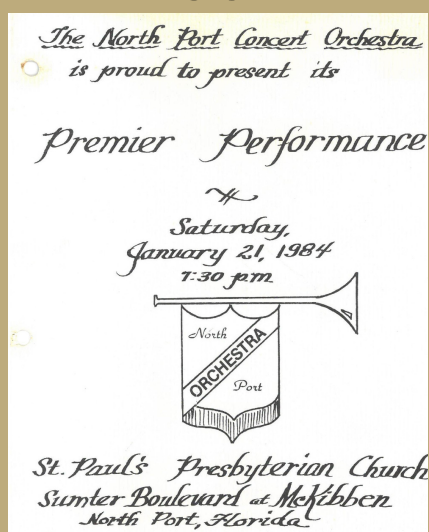


Susan Aaron has been an oboist with us for 13 years, holding the 2nd oboe chair for the past 3. Like many musicians, her love of music stems from a musically-enriched childhood. Both her father and sister played instruments (piano and clarinet) and records always filled the household with a melody. With her parents encouraging her musical studies, a 64-year passion for the oboe was born. "I play for the pure enjoyment of music-it makes me happy!" she notes. The North Port Symphony's camaraderie and diverse repertoire add to Susan's enjoyment while playing. Always making music with a goal in sight, Susan cannot wait to get back to rehearsals!

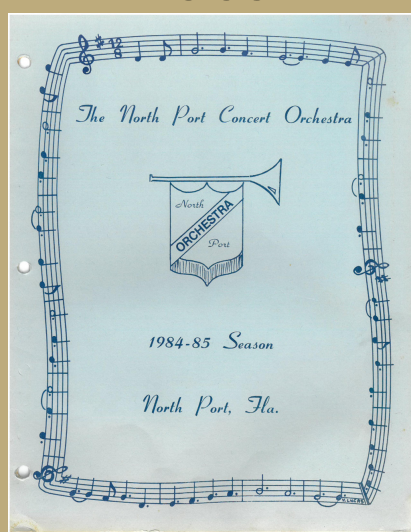
ARCHIVED FEATURETTES

As we anticipate our in-person concerts for the 2021-2022 season, we have been sharing our history on social media through concert programs, meeting notes, and documents dating back to the 1980s. Below you will see the evolution of our program design, paralleling our growth in establishing ourselves as a premier community-based symphony.

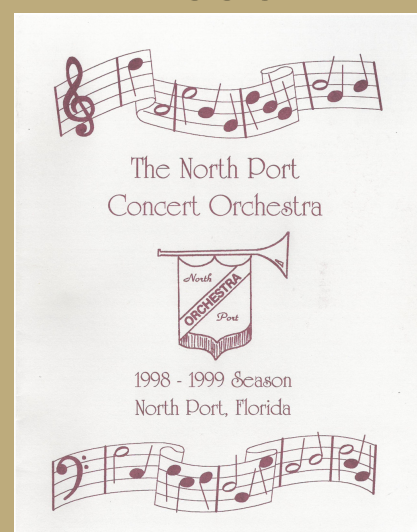
1984



1985



1998



The first program accompanied our symphony's debut on January 21st, 1984 almost 37 years ago. We had a different name, logo, and board of directors, but our intention of playing simply for the love of music has stayed the same! Our programs' simplistic design had touch ups here and there throughout the years, but did not receive its current, attention-grabbing look until 2018. A former symphony player's mother volunteered her graphic design skills to give our well-rehearsed concerts programs of equal quality.

The program to the right is our latest one, capturing our last concert in February of 2020. We anticipate the arrival of our 2021-2022 season and the next batch of programs waiting to excite your eye!

2020



Continuing our Mission of Music Education

As we celebrate March's Music in our School's Month, we reflect on our past and current partnerships with North Port schools.



Since our founding in 1984, the North Port Symphony has given the North Port public school system instruments, concerts, volunteers, and teachers to increase music education awareness to students. One musician assumed most of the responsibility for these outreach initiatives. Her name is Mary Williams. For most of our history, she headed the education and instrumental rental programs, corresponding with teachers and principals on instituting annual education programs and volunteer positions for the symphony. She also created partnerships with city officials and local organizations to secure the funding needed to execute these initiatives.

In a North Port City board meeting in 2004, Williams detailed the entire history of the music education program. Recalling the beginning of them,, she wrote,

"In the fall of 1989 Doris Johnson and I visited Goerge McIntire, the principal of the only grade school in North Port, to offer our services to assist in instrumental teaching. He laughed and said there was no instrumental instruction, nor any instruments. We offered a demonstration of the orchestra's instruments and he immediately accepted."

From there, the schools' old instruments were made new, and the North Port Symphony began the program the following year by donating twenty-five music stands and providing all the volunteer instructors.

To the left, you can see our volunteers in action at Toledo Blade Elementary and Glenallen Elementary schools during the late-80s to mid-90s.

MARCH SYMPHONY NEWS, CONTINUED

In addition to volunteering at Toledo Blade and Glenallen, we also awarded elementary schoolers scholarships to attend a three-week music intensive camp called "Summer Symphony," and high school students scholarships to further their musical studies in college. Our musicians also gave private lessons to promising young musicians.

Building upon our former initiatives, we are inaugurating an annual donation campaign with the North Port High School Orchestra. Unable to secure instruments due to Covid-19 restrictions, the NPHS contacted the North Port City Government for aid, and our board decided to help replace their old instruments with new ones. We're hoping to grow this campaign yearly and replace most of the string instruments at NPHS within the next 10 years with high quality instruments.



The brand new Carlo Lamberti Sonata violin we are donating to the North Port High School Orchestra to begin this renewed partnership.

Sunday, January 21, 1996

Young violin players learned at local school

Because it's such an interesting and inspiring story, I have to share it. It's a story that needs and was just waiting to be told:

Kelly Eaton, violin student, and daughter of Dr. William and Mrs. Isabella Eaton was born in Caen, France. Three short miles from the Normandy Beach. The site of the American Forces' invasion of Europe some 50 years ago.

Nine months after her birth, Kelly and her parents returned to the United States. Subsequently, the Eatons settled in North Port and Dr. Eaton opened his practice here. Later, Kelly entered as a student, the Glenallen School.

Around that time the North Port Concert Orchestra in 1989, sponsored an instrumental program at the North Port Elementary School. At first only strings were taught. Kelly and her brother Will signed up for violin beginners. Her first instructors were Mary Williams, Mary Jo Briggs and Doris Johnson. Kelly studied for three years before moving on to middle school. In the meantime, she took to the violin. Learning first, third and fifth positions in that order.



Paul Mullaney

With each lesson her natural skills were developed and perfected. She still plays on a 3/4 size instrument. While at Glenallen, she took part in several recitals and competitions. Which, because of her natural abilities, she won. When questioned why she decided on the violin, she answered that she loved the music of the instrument. And she can really make that violin talk.

She was selected to play with the West Coast Symphony Summer Orchestra. Each week she had a

Please see VIOLIN, page 10

A newspaper article published in 1996 documenting the influence of North Port Symphony education programs on a local high school violinist.