



VERMONT YOUTH ORCHESTRA

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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VYO NEWS

TROY PETERS AND THE 50TH

Having served as Music Director from 1995 to 2009, I was honored to be invited back to participate in the VYO's 50th anniversary celebration in May. On Friday, May 2, the weekend opened with a special event that recreated the VYO's very first concert in April 1964. Held in the same venue as that inaugural concert five decades earlier (Lyman C. Hunt Middle School), the performance featured VYOA's younger orchestras playing the same music that had been played 50 years earlier, including works by Sammartini, Frescobaldi, Bach, Mozart, and Brahms. I was struck to note that these younger groups sometimes played almost as well as the top orchestra did 19 years ago.

On Sunday afternoon, May 4, the VYO took the stage at the Flynn Center for the grand finale of the celebration. The centerpiece of the concert was Beethoven's monumental Ninth Symphony. Performing the Beethoven someday was one of our dreams when we started the VYO Chorus in 2007, so it was especially gratifying to see it come off so well. The orchestra and chorus also presented the world premiere performance of *A Daily Presence*, a beautiful piece written for the occasion by 2010 VYO alumnus **TIM WOOS**, flute, '06-'07, co-principal '07-'08; principal bassoon, '08-'10. Homeschooled in New Haven, VT. There was a lovely tribute to Carolyn Long, in which she was awarded a lifetime backstage parking pass for all VYO concerts at the Flynn! The biggest thrill for me was the chance to conduct a crackerjack orchestra of 62 alumni from many different eras in a performance of Sibelius's *Finlandia* (a favorite of former VYO conductor Ray Anderson and a work I included on my very first VYO concert in 1995).

As if all that were not exciting enough, I also had the chance to return to Vermont in June, this time conducting my current orchestra, YOSA (Youth Orchestras of San Antonio). We arrived at the end of a weeklong tour of Québec, and after a Lake Champlain cruise and a Ben & Jerry's factory tour, my orchestra of Texans fell in love with Vermont summer! When the time came to play our concert at the Elley-Long Music Center, we were in for a surprise, though: 90 minutes before the concert, we learned that our equipment truck was still in Québec and wouldn't arrive in time for the concert. Thankfully, the VYO community came together with tremendous aplomb, helping us pull together replacement cellos, basses, and percussion, so we could get on with the concert. Special thanks to Art DeQuasie, Mia Fritze, Jeff Domoto, and **KATHY REILLY** (violin '78-'81, principal viola '81-'83, EJHS, co-owner with husband Owen Kronick of the Vermont Violin Shop) for helping save the day.

After five years away from Vermont, it was wonderful to make music with my friends at the VYO—I hope it won't be another five years before I am back again!

ENDANGERED INSTRUMENT -- STRING BASS

BENJAMIN (BEN) R. GREEN, principal VYO bass '05-'08, Rutland HS. Soloist fall '07 – Koussevitsky, *Concerto in f sharp minor for Double Bass and Orchestra*, Boston University – Bass Performance.

The VYOA has found it hard to produce three full orchestras recently because of a shortage of winds, brass, and bass players. The result has been the abandoning of Sinfonia, beginning with the '14-'15 season. The shortage of string basses had been developing over a number of years. When Ben joined, the VYO had four. There were seven in '09-'10, a peak year. But by '12-'13 the total had gradually dropped to three. There was one bass for '13-'14, but she couldn't play First Night so four alumni were brought in. Now, for the concert at the Flynn on September 29, there was just an empty space behind the cellos.

Since July, Ben has been working part-time for the VYOA as Librarian. He hopes in the other part of his time to try to remedy the sad bass situation. He wants to build a private bass studio to serve the Rutland, St. Albans, and Burlington areas. He is planning school visits to give demonstrations and classes. Already, twice a week he commutes to Rutland, where he gives a bass clinic at Rutland HS. He hopes to be able to work with the Lakes Region Youth Orchestra.

Ben says it is his goal for the future to train the next generation of aspiring basses. He wants “to devote my time to strengthening this organization which played such an important role in my education.”

ALUMNI NEWS

BRUCE PASHA, percussion ‘64-’65, BHS. Berklee College of Music. Bruce pursued a musical career in his early years. He was appointed to the faculty of Berklee in ’72. He toured the U.S. with the Disney on Parade Orchestra. After getting a MA in Humanistic Psychology, he had 12 years as a psychotherapist at Emerson Hospital. Next, he returned to school at UMASS in Lowell, MA, for a teaching certificate. In 1990, he was hired by the Carroll School in Lincoln, MA, to be their music teacher. The school is a private school for kids with learning disabilities.

In conjunction with the drama teacher, they mounted Broadway shows including *The Music Man*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Bruce writes, “We also created an original musical called *Breaking Through* about the experience of being a dyslexic from a middle school student’s point of view. I wrote all the music and lyrics. We took the show to many Boston area schools, performing for over 20,000 students and teachers.”

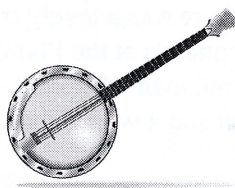
Bruce also taught Tai Chi for 20 years in the Concord area, but having retired from the Carroll School in 2010 writes, “Now I am pursuing a different path teaching Mindfulness Meditation, which I have been practicing since 1971.”

Bruce has two sons. One is a musical theater actor in NYC and the other just got his Masters degree from the University of Texas in kinesiology research.

BRAD PERSING, bass, ’64-’65, BHS. Brad writes that he has been an advanced practice nurse working as a cardiac transplant coordinator at Duke University Medical Center for the past ten years. “Prior to that, I worked as a cardiothoracic intensive care nurse at DUMC and in various roles at other medical centers in North Carolina, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. I retired at the end of

June this year and have spent the time since then traveling to China and along the East Coast with my family until my daughters returned to school.

It has been a long time since I attempted to play music seriously, but the bass I played with the VYO has remained with me to this day. Along the way my repertoire has changed from classical to folk, jazz and blue grass, and I added other instruments including a banjo, mandolin, violin, guitar, and a gu zheng.” [ed: a gu zheng is a plucked 21 string Chinese instrument with bridges.]



“The only instruments currently in use are the violin and gu zheng, and I can take credit for neither since they are played by my daughters. The youngest recently informed me that practicing is ‘boring’ (favorite word) and if I expect to continue I will need to accompany her on violin. She may regret this ultimatum.

I am glad the VYO continues to thrive, and it is possible that one day my youngest and I will be able to attend a concert during one of our trips north.”

CYRUS ROBERTS, violin VYS ’01-’02 A.D. Lawton; Sinfonia ’02-’03 EJHS; Philharmonia ’03-’04; VYO ’04-’06, EJHS. James Madison Univ. BS; State Univ. Albany MS Public Health.

Cyrus has had many connections with health organizations as a volunteer, including the Alzheimer’s Association and Ronald McDonald House in the Burlington area.

Cyrus has great memories of the VYO. “Some of my most vivid memories were at VYOA camp for VYO and Philharmonia. I remember connecting with many of the younger students at camp since I was not the most gifted of musicians and I knew that my days as a violinist were ultimately over after graduating from high school. I was able to enjoy the interaction with other students and was saved from getting caught up in trying to be the best musician.”

He remembers being in awe of going to play at Carnegie Hall his first year in the orchestra. “How am I going to top this next year?” He also wished the chairs at the ELMC were as comfortable as the ones at Carnegie!

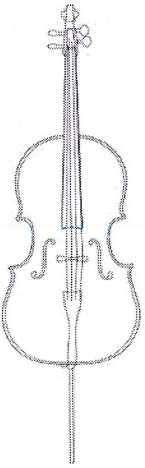
CARNEGIE HALL

The years from 2002 could have been a setback for Cyrus, musically and otherwise. In 2002, while he was in VYS, he had to have a heart transplant because of restrictive cardiomyopathy (a rigidity of the heart muscles). All went well until 2013 when he had a heart attack requiring another heart transplant this year.

Cyrus is recovering at home, living with his parents. He writes, “Through all of this I’ve come to many realizations. Some of them are clichés (‘don’t take life for granted’) or funny (‘now you’ve been broken-hearted both literally and figuratively’); others are more serious and are messages that are good to pass on to all generations. I think back now of the time in VYOA and almost all of it was positive and helped define who I am today.

Most importantly, though, many alumni are still connected, donating time or money, or reaching out to mentor other VYO students and younger alumni, even though not all of them continued with a career in music. The support the VYOA gives is tremendous, and I wish them the best of luck over the next 50 years.”

CATHERINE BORCHERT cello ’71-’73. Spaulding HS. Catherine’s family left Vermont for California when she was in the tenth grade and in the VYO. Catherine, who is now an MD specializing in psychiatry, writes from Santa Cruz: “The treasures of my two years with the VYO carried forward in my intentions to provide a musical education for my own children. A photo of young children playing stringed instruments caught my eye one day, when I was still in medical school, with a caption about the integral role of instrumental experience in the Waldorf School curriculum. Years later, when my son was ready to start kindergarten, I sought out the local Waldorf School specifically to foster his experience in music and the arts. He started on cello, and my daughter on violin. We all took piano lessons together and played together at recitals. They rose through the ranks of the school and community orchestras, and I shuttled them around to lessons, rehearsals, and summer music camps, sometimes grumpily! This past Sunday, Mother’s Day, my daughter, now leaving for college, performed in her last concert with the Santa Cruz Youth Symphony. I was proud as I watched her playing principal viola for wonderful music, including Stravinsky’s *Firebird Suite* and Ravel’s *Pavane for a Dead Princess*.”

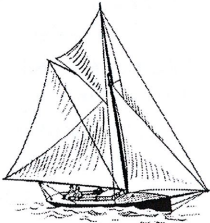


After the concert, Cathy volunteered to become a member of the Board of Directors and decided it was time to get her cello out and start working on her own musical skills again. She thanks the VYO for “one of the most precious gifts I have ever received.”

DAVID WEBSTER, cello ’71-’73, CVU. Swarthmore College. UVM - B.A. in History and M.A. in Cultural History. David played cello in the Swarthmore and UVM orchestras, and in the Vermont Philharmonic until 1983. At that point, he opened a restaurant in Shelburne, the Village Pump House, where he cooked for 19 years, pretty much eliminating evening time for orchestral playing.

Realizing he couldn’t continue in the restaurant business forever, David took accounting courses, and for the last ten plus years has worked as a tax accountant. Earlier, he did find a little afternoon time to play in a quartet under Melissa Brown’s coaching. He’d very much like to get into chamber music playing again.

MARY HARVEY BANDISH, ’77-’78 principal clarinet, Harwood UHS. Mary writes, “I have been enjoying music around Vermont for 31 years since graduating from the Crane School of Music in 1983. For the past 20 years I have had the pleasure of teaching and playing all styles of music with enthusiastic band students in grades 4-8 in the Brattleboro School district. I even had the pleasure of chaperoning our high school band (when my son was in it) to President Obama’s first inaugural parade. I have adjudicated for festivals all around Vermont and played in ensembles from Burlington to Brattleboro. Presently, I enjoy playing first clarinet in the Putney School Community Orchestra, and in area town bands. I live in Dummerston with my son, who is a senior at Clarkson University, and enjoy sailing with him on our 36-foot sloop around Lake Champlain every summer. Gardening and skiing keep me enjoying life when I’m not teaching.”



PATTY CLEARY BERGERON, French horn ’78-’81, principal ’79-’80, SBHS. For the May ’81 concert, Patty played first horn for the Mozart *Divertimento No. 2* with horns **JENNIFER SCRIGGINS** ’79-’84, Plattsburgh HS; **JERRY LARRABEE** ’79-’81, Montpelier HS; and **TOD LUGINBUHL** ’79-’81, SBHS.

Piano was Patty’s major instrument. She taught all four of her children and maintained a studio with as many as 70 students per year. She gave her horn to her son Trevor, and then to her youngest, Tommy.

Patty teaches at her home in Essex Junction. She writes, “In addition to teaching, I am active in local and state music teacher groups and will attend the upcoming VMTA state convention. The convention topic is ‘Musician’s Guide to the Brain.’”

She is also excited about organizing a monster concert for a local branch of the Music Teachers. A monster concert is a large duet/trio concert that has multiple pianos playing at the same time. It is not all chaos because they are all playing the same piece!

TREVOR BERGERON, French horn, '99-'02 A.D. Lawton; entered VYO '02 as principal horn, continued as principal or co-principal to '06, EJHS.

He soloed with the VYO in the Gordon Jacobs *Horn Concerto*, (first movement) at Missisquoi Valley UHS and at the Flynn in the fall of 2005. Trevor graduated from Arizona State University with a BS and a MBA in accounting and lives in Mesa, AZ. He works for Touche Tohmatsu Limited in the auditing department.

ALEX BERGERON, trumpet, '04-'05 Sinfonia and '05-'07 Philharmonia, EJHS. Alex works at the Cleary Stone Company alongside his grandparents. He lives in Richmond. The trumpet comes out occasionally, and his mom is excited that he decided to buy his own piano last summer.

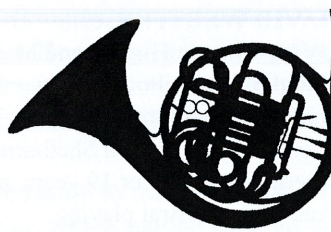
VICTORIA BERGERON, violin, '03-'04, VYS, fourth grade Fleming Elementary; '04-'05, Sinfonia, Fleming; '05-'07, Philharmonia; '07-'12, VYO, concertmaster '10-'12, EJHS. University of Maryland in College Park, junior year. This summer she attended the National Orchestra Institute in June, the California Summer Music in Sanoma in July, and played with the Caroga Lake Music Festival in the Adirondacks in August before returning to Vermont to intern with the very exciting Lake Champlain Chamber Music Festival at the ELMC.

THOMAS BERGERON, French horn, '12-'13 Philharmonia, seventh grade; '14-'15 principal VYO, EJHS. In addition to VYO, he is involved in music theater and was excited to be part of the Flynn Arts summer theater productions.

LISA GUTKNECHT MOGHISSI, '80-'81 Assistant Concertmaster; '81-'82 Concertmaster. Lisa writes, "My family and I moved to Ohio 12 years ago for my husband's job (after spending 10 years in Texas). In some ways it was a coming home as I grew up in Ohio before my family moved to Vermont when I was a high school sophomore. We love our home in Dublin, a suburb of Columbus with excellent schools. Karl, my oldest son, is a high school junior and plays violin with the Columbus Youth Orchestra; he plans to study computer engineering when he attends college. Maria, my middle child, is a high school sophomore and plays cello with the Columbus Youth Orchestra, but her true love is Marching Band, where she plays trombone. Alan, the youngest, is in the seventh grade and plays piano.

The instrumentation is by design. With me on violin and Oliver (my husband) on viola, we have a nice quartet, and with piano as needed. We mostly play for our church, but have done two family weddings so far. Most importantly, we have fun playing together. I have also been the parent representative for the orchestra for several years.

I continue to work part time as a Neonatal Nurse Practitioner in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit for the Nationwide Children's



Hospital. I love my work with babies. I have made several trips back to Vermont, especially in the past year, to help care for my aging parents. I will try to coordinate one of my trips to hear the VYO. I have fond memories of my time with the orchestra."

HEATHER BLOOM, French horn '86-'87, BHS. Heather writes, "After completing my final years of medical training in Cardiac Electrophysiology at Emory University in 2005, I became faculty and am currently an Associate Professor of Medicine at Emory. I love my work at the Atlanta VA Medical Center and at Grady Memorial Hospital, both of which specialize in underserved patients. I'm a single mom to two wonderful boys, Travis and Tristan Collins, ages 9 and 6, who attend Midtown International School. We all adore the school,

which focuses on creating globally-minded citizens by teaching critical thinking, environmental studies, Spanish, French, and Mandarin, and offers international travel. Both boys take cello lessons, and Travis wants to play the tuba! He can make some interesting noises on my French horn, which I admittedly have not picked up in years. Despite our crazy-busy life style, I still manage to play in two ice hockey leagues, since the games usually start between 9:00 and 11:30 p.m.! I adore Atlanta, but will always miss Vermont."

GREG BEMIS, French horn '86-'88, BHS. BS Emerson College. Greg teaches at Champlain College in Burlington. He writes, "I'm involved in their Game Design and Development program. I teach mostly production and design classes so I get to work with a variety of students (Programmers, Artists, Designers, Management). It's fulfilling work. I am also finishing my MFA there in Emergent Media."

Although Greg lives in Essex Junction now, his career began in California, where he worked for about ten years in Software Development and Television Production. "When my wife and I decided to start a family, we figured it would be a good time to move back to the East Coast. More than ten years later we've settled in pretty well. I have a 12 year-old daughter who attends A.D. Lawton and a 7 year-old at Hiawatha Elementary."

ALYSIA KWON, viola, VYO '84-'86 South Burlington Middle School; '86-'90, principal '88-'90 SBHS. Alysia writes, "I have enjoyed receiving the VYO Newsletter over the years. It's impressive to learn of everything that's been accomplished due to the hard work of those who love music and want to support it in the community.

I have to admit, though, that reading the newsletters sometimes makes me feel old. I'm reminded of things like VYO camp in Poultney where everyone—boys and girls—stayed in the same dorm, thus making it easier for cross-floor water fights to erupt.

As for me, I have mostly been working on a degree in public health (Barnard College, Columbia University in NY and then the Harvard School of Public Health) before moving to study



at the Los Angeles School of Public Health. It was a welcome change from the cold weather back east!

I haven't touched my viola in years. But I did sing with Coro Allegro, an LBGT classical chorus in Boston, and with Vox Femina, a women's chorus in L.A. Although singing in a chorus is quite different from playing in a chamber group or an orchestra, it's rewarding to have been able to use my training in viola and piano and be a part of creating music with others. Also, you don't have to tote a big instrument around!"

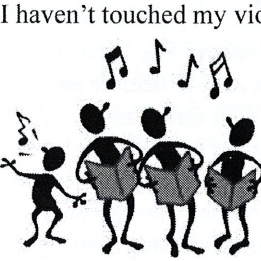
SEAN NEWHOUSE violin, '92-'98, SBHS. Sean's update of news since two years ago fills more than a page! Here is a somewhat abbreviated version. "I am writing between flights at Keflavik Airport in Reykjavik on a trip to Boston to conduct the world premiere at Jordan Hall of Patricia Leonard's orchestral song cycle, *My Dearest Friend*, based on the letters between John and Abigail Adams. I say 'a trip to Boston' because my wife, Marie, has taken a tenure-track faculty position on the law faculty of the University of Surrey, and so we have moved to the lovely city of Guildford in southeast England, only a 35-minute express train ride from London."

It's lucky that Sean is a dual citizen of the US and the UK (Sean's father was born in England) because Sean feels that now is his "great opportunity to reconnect with part of my heritage." He is working on making professional contacts for conducting work in the UK as well as in Europe. Being close to London helps.

Sean wants to build up his proficiency in conducting operatic works. He has worked at the Boston Lyric Opera and Glimmerglass Opera. Most recently he conducted his own production of *Hansel and Gretel* at MetroWest Opera. "I am happy to share that this month I have been honored by the Solti Foundation US for the second time (I received a Career Assistance Award in 2011) with selection for a residency at the Florentine Opera in 2015."

Sean saves for last "the most exciting and happy news of all." A baby girl is joining them in mid-February!

ANNA JESSE - SISTER CECILIA cello '91-'96, principal '95-'96. Soloist May 5, '96 – Saint-Saëns *Concerto No. 1 in a minor*. EJHS. Ana has spent the last three "wonderful years" in London, England, with the Franciscan Sisters of Renewal. She returned to the Bronx to Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent on Sept. 3rd, where "I will be coordinating our food giveout, directing our Sisters' choir, and teaching music to our Sister candidates. (Plenty to keep me busy!)" She hopes to have more time for practicing her cello. "What a great gift music is, and what a great gift VYO was during my high school years!"



ERIK NYE, viola, '95-'96, Vergennes UHS, McGill University, music composition, piano performance, minor in management. Erik's life after McGill has not been dull. He took a year off to live in Prague teaching English for six months and then traveling for six more. Further: he moved to Los Angeles in 2002, got a graduate certificate in Scoring for Motion Pictures

and Television at the University of Southern California. And then he says, "I promptly lost interest in composing for media and got a job at Los Angeles County Museum of Art. From there I got a job at the Craft and Folk Art Museum, then worked for an art consultant in Venice for a few years. At this point I transitioned to managing digital products [ed. a website, a mobile app, a feed service], and I have since worked for tech companies in Marina del Rey, Santa Monica, and now at the LA Times."

In addition to the above, Erik plays piano accompaniment for young violinists (age 6 to 16) at a West Hollywood studio. And on a homier note, Erik has bought a "crazy octagonal 1985 house," one of 12 in the Hollywood Hills neighborhood.

ERIK KENYON, trombone '96-'98, BFA St. Albans. Erik went to UVM to major in music, but graduated as a music minor with majors in Greek and Philosophy, followed by an MA in Classics. Taking a gap year, he worked first as Logistics Officer for the Vermont Mozart Festival and then in the meat room at City Market. Working in a meat room ended up being useful for teaching philosophy. "I get a lot of mileage drawing on personal experience to explain Plato's claim that a definition should 'cut nature at its joints.'"

Grad school at Cornell University (2005-20012) earned him a PhD in Classics with a dissertation on Augustine of Hippo. He is currently Visiting Professor at Rollins College, a small liberal arts school in Winter Park, Florida. His teaching load includes courses in Latin Language, Greek Literature, Ancient & Medieval Philosophy, Skepticism and Evil. Contrary to his



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and any address changes to
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expectations, he even enjoys teaching Ethics to 20 year-olds. He has presented at numerous conferences, published three articles and is (he hopes!) nearing the final stages of his first book, *Augustine and the Dialogue*.

While Erik’s trombone hasn’t seen the light of day since the late 90’s, music has stayed a major part of his life. At UVM, he was student member of the Lane Series Board, sang in down-town choirs, and served as organist for Grace Episcopal Church in Sheldon. There he raised funds and oversaw the restoration of the parish’s 1833 Henry Erben organ, originally built for St. Paul’s Cathedral in Burlington. Grad school proved to be really bad for his pedal technique, yet he still managed to sing, play and even conduct for various churches.

He is currently faculty advisor/music director for the Rollins Canterbury Club, an Episcopal student group which sings Compline weekly. With one year left of a three-year contract, Erik is back on the market this fall, hoping finally to land a grown-up job. “Preferably somewhere with snow.”

INDIGO RUTH-DAVIS, cello ’97-’99 U32; ’99-’02 High Mowing School NH. ’00-’01 VYO principal cello; ’01-’02 co-principal. Mannes College of Music. Indigo built up an unusual amount of playing beyond his work in the VYO. As a tenth grader, he was principal cello with the NH All State Orchestra and the New England Music Festival. As a junior, he won a VT Philharmonic scholarship and soloed with the orchestra on the Schumann *Cello Concerto*. Finally, with the VYO as a senior in September he played the Dvorak *Cello Concerto in e minor*, (Allegro movement), at North field HS and the Flynn.

At the same time at High Mowing School he was interested in chamber music, painting, and philosophy. After graduation, Indigo’s interest in music continued with mainly non-classical groups. At present he is contributing to the sound track for the documentary, *The Vermont Movie*.

But next comes the surprise. Indigo is now a Certified Passive Home Consultant for Montpelier Construction. Energy efficiency is the goal for a new house properly constructed. The result will be the use of 1/10th the amount of energy needed for a standard house. Indigo wants to tell people about this great new project. His email is indigoruth-davis@gmail.com.

EMILY BAYER-PACHT, violin ’98-’99 Waldorf School, 8th grade; ’99-’01 CVU; ’01-’03 High Mowing School, NH. Emily played with the VYO reunion orchestra this spring. She writes, “I loved playing in the reunion concert. It brought back so many wonderful memories.”

After high school graduation, she received a B.M. in violin performance from New York University.

“I spent a year teaching violin at a public school out in Sheeps-head Bay, Brooklyn, and performing a bit around the city. I loved teaching, but also wanted to continue my education, so decided to go to law school. I graduated from Benjamin Cardozo School of Law in June of 2001. I loved law school,

and particularly enjoyed my year working with the Innocence Project, a clinic and non-profit organization that was founded at Cardozo and works to exonerate innocent people who were wrongly convicted through DNA evidence. My husband and I decided it was time to start a family. I always knew that I wanted to raise kids in Vermont, so I decided to decline an offer to work at a mid-size law firm on Wall Street and instead moved back to Vermont. We bought a house in Hinesburg and now have two children, Ella 2 ½, and Lillian, 6 months. I have been practicing law in Vermont on and off part-time so that I can be home with my children while they are young. I still play the violin regularly and plan to spend time with my teaching as the children get older.”

SARAH MACY DUFFY , clarinet, bass clarinet, ’02-’03, EJHS. UVM - BS in Political Science; BS in Professional Accounting. Following college graduation, Sarah worked briefly in public accounting before accepting a job with the city of St. Albans as City Accountant. She serves on the board of directors for the Vermont Government Finance Officers Association, and is working on a Master’s degree from Rutgers in Governmental Accounting.

Clarinet has not been forgotten. At UVM, Sarah played in the band, orchestra, and Wind Ensemble. She writes, “Since graduation, I have enjoyed giving beginner lessons, taking lessons, and playing in community groups. I particularly enjoy pit band



and have accompanied productions of *Oliver*, *Camelot*, and *My Fair Lady* in the last five years.” Sarah plays in the Citizens’ Concert Band in St. Albans and recently had a “marvelous time connecting with old friends” in the VYO Alumni Orchestra.

Sarah lives in St. Albans with her husband, Matt, their 19 month-old son, Cooper, an old English sheepdog, Daisy, and a cat, Cedar.

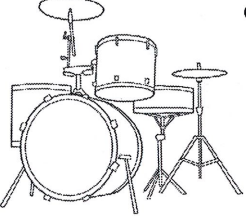
REBECCA MACIJESKI, violin ’02-’03, Northfield HS. Simmons College ’07. BA double major in English and Music with a cross registration from New England Conservatory in Music. Rebecca played for four years with the New England Philharmonic. She spent May and June of 2006 touring Austria as part of a study abroad course, during which she visited the birthplaces of Mozart and Haydn.

After her English major, she earned an MFA in Poetry from Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier, which enabled another summer trip to Europe—this time to study writing in Italy and Slovenia. Rebecca currently attends the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, where she received a full fellowship to teach writing and to earn her PhD in poetry. She also serves as an Assistant Editor in poetry for the literary journal *Prairie Schooner*.

Music remains a creative influence. Rebecca is currently working on a poetry manuscript that draws heavily on her orchestral

experience. One of the members of her doctoral committee is a conductor with the London Symphony Orchestra.

SASHA ROSS BECKER, viola ’06-’07, U32. Sasha writes: “I am currently at UVM, a major in Fine Arts and a minor in Theater, but a focus on graphic design. The specific of graphic design is basically creating the layout of a poster, sign, newsletter, etc. to get the audience to better understand what is being offered. I am interning at VSA Vermont as a graphic design intern. This organization provides art and art classes for people with disabilities. I have previously interned at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England in marketing, as well as at Nectar’s and Higher Ground as a graphic designer. For VSA Vermont, I am currently working on advertising posters, animation for a slideshow, and stickers and tattoos for an event they are putting on at the ELMC. It is called Boom VT and it is a



collaboration of people with and without disabilities to learn how to play the drums! I feel it is something I care a lot about these days, for I have a disability myself, and I would love to open humanity’s perception of disabilities to a more positive spectrum.”

What Sasha does not write about is her disability. Shortly after her senior year in the VYO and the trip to China she was struck with a brain tumor. Surgery proved it to be benign, but the weakness in her right side will continue for some time.

How will this affect her music playing? Sasha definitely wants to get back to viola playing. Her left hand is okay, but her bowing is still not strong. She hopes to join a group where the playing is just fun.

MARGA KEMPNER , violin, C.P. Smith School ’04-’05; Hunt Middle School ’05-’06; BHS ’06-’10. Ass’t Concertmaster ’08-’09; Co-Concertmaster ’09-’10. Marga writes , “I’m currently in my third year at Brown, doing Portuguese and Brazilian Studies and Biology. I spent the summer in Rio de Janeiro making a documentary film about a family that lived through the military dictatorship. I can’t wait to return to Brazil!”

Marga hasn’t played in the Brown University Orchestra yet, but she enjoys the concerts when she’s in Providence.

IN MEMORIAM

BILL PHILLIPS, French horn ’75-’76, Fair Haven UHS. Word has just been received that Bill died in his sleep from a heart attack or stroke on April 25, 2008. He had just turned 50. Bill was a steady member of a barbershop chorus, as well as a church choir director, in St. Petersburg, FL. His wife, Sandy, writes, “We were actually in the process of moving to Tennessee. We had built a house there and had come to see it the weekend before Bill died. The house was officially completed on the day he died. He was very happy to be moving there because it was rather like the country life he had known as a boy in Vermont. I am sorry that he didn’t actually get to live here, but I know that he enjoyed the adventure of building a home and living his dream. Bill was always proud of being in the VYO. He told me many stories of his time there.” In the 1999 VYO survey, Bill wrote that his outstanding memory was “the thrill of getting to be in an organization with so many talented individuals and getting to create the magic of *A Night on Bald Mountain*.”

PAUL BRANA, VYOA 1997-2007, New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music All of us at the VYOA are saddened by the loss of Paul Brana, who passed away on July 10. Paul played violin in the VYS from 1997-98 while he was in the third grade at Orchard School in South Burlington. (There was no Presto for young violinists in those days.) As a sixth grader he joined Sinfonia, but left in 2004 to concentrate on trumpet. He joined the VYO in 2005 as a junior and became principal trumpet in his final year. In that year he also was soloist in the Arutunian Trumpet Concerto with the Philharmonia as well as playing in the All Eastern Jazz Band. After graduation, Paul played with the VYO for its summer concert tour to China in 2007.

The years after graduation he studied at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music in New York City, and played jazz trumpet ensemble performances in NYC and with the Burlington Discover Jazz Festival. One of his compositions, the sextet Armed and Hammered, can be heard and seen online. One of his NYC colleagues thought he would be one of the most important trumpet players in years to come.

Paul said on leaving the VYO, “Both music and the VYOA have been part of my life as long as I can remember.”

He will be greatly missed by many.
