



LOS ANGELES SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BAND

By Dawn Anderson

Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Band

A TRADITION OF SERVICE THROUGH MUSIC

The LASD Band has some exciting news.

We have been hard at work recording a CD that will be used to showcase our bands. Our Swing Band plays jazz/swing genres, and our Concert Band plays music to fit all occasions, with selections from our library of modern, classical, patriotic and old favorites, as well as songs from musicals

and children's programs. Our Swing Band consists of 17 members, and they are selected from our Concert Band, which includes over 65 musicians. Our plan is to have CDs ready for distribution sometime this summer.



We will now continue on our musical journey into the Concert Band's clarinet section. I would like to introduce you to our oldest member, Sam Engle. Sam comes from a long line of centenarians — his mother lived to be 102, and his brother celebrated his 100th birthday last year. At 91, Sam doesn't seem to be slowing down one bit. He is an important part of our clarinet section, playing the alto clarinet, which is one of the larger

clarinets in the woodwind family primarily used in concert bands with a sizable section. Having a musician who can play the alto clarinet allows for a broader and fuller sound from the clarinets. The alto clarinet strengthens the section, adding depth by using lower tones that can't be reached by B-flat clarinets. In addition to the beautiful lower tones, the alto clarinet's upper register has a magnificent sound that, when combined with the other clarinets, gives the audience a greater melodic experience.



Sam was born in the small town of Steubenville, Ohio, and he proudly announces that he hails from the same town as Dean Martin. Sam first

became interested in playing an instrument when he watched his older brother march in the high school band down a main street parade. Sam was just 10 years old at the time and joined in the parade, trying to keep time on his snare drum. What followed were experimentations with a plethora of instruments — some in the percussion section, like the xylophone and the glockenspiel, then tenor sax and finally the clarinet. He was allowed to play the tenor sax in his high school band when he wasn't banging on the glockenspiel. Sam continued his education, graduating from Bethany College in 1949 with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry. His career brought him to California in 1960, where he worked to develop high-temperature-resistant coatings for the military and aerospace industries. Among the many uses of his coating materials, some impressive items that have been coated include the Sidewinder missile, ASROC deck areas and Thor/Delta satellite launch vehicles. Having had to sideline his musical tendencies for his career, he was happy to resume playing in 1999. He is an integral part of the clarinet section because he can play many instruments in the clarinet family. In addition to the LASD Band, he is currently playing with the Burbank Community Band. We hope to celebrate his 100th birthday with him as he continues to grace the LASD Band with his musical talents.

Chuck Perlman, a dedicated and dependable member of our clarinet section, hails from Cleveland, Ohio. At age 7, he began his musical lessons on the piano. His mother, who was also musically talented and had perfect pitch, saved up enough money to purchase a baby grand. Many

musicians start their musical lessons on the piano because reading piano music requires learning both treble and bass clefs and reading more than one note at a time. Music for most instruments is written in either treble or bass clefs, and most instruments can only play one note at a time, so learning to read music first on the piano gives the musician a good foundation to jump right into learning a second instrument. Like most of us, Chuck tried many instruments, including the violin and the saxophone, before landing on his instrument of choice, the clarinet. In high school, he played under the baton of Ralph Rush, who later taught at USC. Chuck played in a “hillbilly” band that had the unique honor of being chosen as the closing act for the Cleveland Press Christmas television special, the first TV show to come out of Cleveland in 1947. He continued his education at the University of Pennsylvania, where he played in both the marching and dance bands. After graduation, Chuck went on to earn his law degree at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. He served his country in the U.S. Army, living in Japan for much of his service. When he completed his service in 1959, he came to California to continue his education, earning his MBA at Cal State Long Beach. He passed both the Ohio and California state bar exams and practiced law and accounting in California. As an attorney and CPA, he specialized in tax work and estate planning. Chuck loves to travel, and his musical career has afforded him the opportunity to visit many countries. He has been a member of our band for over 25 years and has played in many Southland bands. He also serves the LASD community in another very important role: working as a ham radio operator in the Sheriff’s



Department’s Disaster Communications Service. Thanks for all you do, Chuck!

Moving further into the clarinet section, we find our resident M.D., Dr. Dave Fisher. Born in Glendale, Dave was adopted at birth by two physicians. Since both parents were interested in medicine and music, they hired a governess to help raise a young Dr. Dave in an environment heavily influenced by both disciplines. He started piano lessons at age 4, and by age 6 was learning the clarinet. Since the regular B-flat clarinet was too big for him to hold, he started on the much smaller E-flat clarinet. For two years, he studied on the smaller clarinet until he was finally able to play the B-flat at age 8. When he was in seventh and eighth grade, he was already playing in the high school band during summers, and when he entered high school, Newbury Park Adventist Academy, he became the principal clarinet player and remained in that position all four years. He continued his education at La Sierra University, where he spent six years taking pre-med courses while playing in both the university’s band and orchestra. After graduation, he entered medical school and then went on to complete his residency in Philadelphia, specializing in orthopedic surgery. During this time, he had no time for his music. Since moving back to California with his bride from Philadelphia, his family has grown to four sons and five grandchildren, and somewhere along the way, he began playing again. He is a proud member of the LASD Concert and Swing Bands and plays in many local Southland bands. It was only a couple of years ago that Dr. Dave had the opportunity to meet his birth mother, and he discovered that she and her brothers were all avid athletes; her three brothers all played professional baseball. Throughout his life, his love of sports had always



been evident — he played golf, basketball and baseball and participated in track — but he is grateful to his adoptive parents, whom he credits with widening his future in the areas of music and medicine. We are grateful as well and thank Dr. Dave for all his musical contributions to the LASD Bands.

Dr. Don Holcomb, conductor extraordinaire, touted the numerous benefits of playing a musical instrument. There are health benefits, such as learning how to control your breathing and keeping your mind active by reading notes and keeping time with the rest of the band. Andre Giacomelli, who is 87 years young and a vital part of the clarinet section, started playing for health reasons. When he was 11, his family doctor suggested that he start playing the clarinet to help his lungs develop and work to their full potential. After high school, he stopped playing to serve in the Korean War on a Navy submarine, and then went on to work in the L.A. Unified School District and raise five children. After 58 years of not touching the clarinet, he started up again and is presently enjoying all the benefits, including the social interactions with the extraordinary members of the LASD Band. A native Angeleno and member of many Southland community bands, Andre proudly admits that playing the clarinet keeps him young at heart!

If you play an instrument or have previously played an instrument, it may be to time to dust it off and join the LASD Band. If you would like to have one of our bands perform for an event, either the dance band or concert band (subject to Department guidelines), please contact me at Dawn.LASDBand@gmail.com. ☆