

## Meet the Orchestra

**As a community orchestra, our members come from all walks of life, and have a wide variety of skills and interests. So that we can share this fascinating diversity with you, we've asked our members to tell a bit about themselves.**

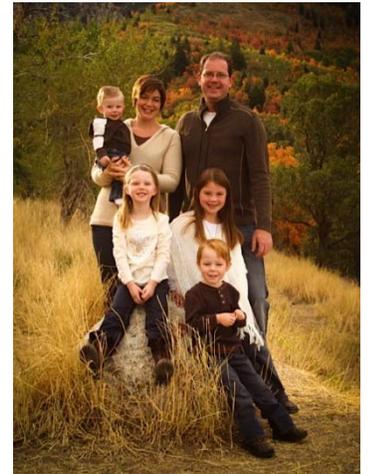


**Margaret Smith, Bass.** Since I was a small child I have been surrounded by music and have loved it. My great-grandmother wrote hymns, my grandfather and his brothers played in the Southern Pacific Band in Ogden, and my grandmother played piano and organ. My mother played the double bass and baritone horn, and my father played the tuba, so I guess I was destined to play in the bass clef. I was fortunate to marry a musician and to be able to encourage music in our family. I played the bass in elementary through high school, and then joined the University of Utah orchestra while I was studying the sciences. After changing my major to music I studied bass with Jerry Johnson, Patrick Zwick and Audrey Bush. I was awarded a grant to study at the Sun Valley Music Camp, which was fun and enriching. After a year, I changed majors to Pharmacy then received a BS from the U of U in Speech Pathology and Audiology. I received a teaching certificate in Special Education from the U of U, and later received a MEd in Special Education from USU. After 29 years of teaching in private and public schools as well as Youth Corrections, I retired in 2004.

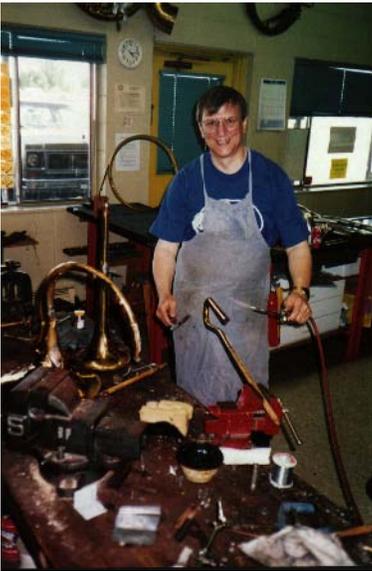
I have played in the U of U orchestra, Wasatch Community Orchestra, Murray Symphony, Salt Lake Opera Theatre, and in the Salt Lake Symphony since 1988. It has been very rewarding to be associated with such a wonderful group of musicians, our fabulous music director Robert Baldwin, and to have my husband Paul and our son Zeph play percussion in the SLS as well. My niece and nephew have played with us, and my mother Nan Shulz strongly supported the SLS and volunteered as an usher for many years. Shortly after joining the SLS, I was asked to serve on the Board, and have continued in this position. My "baby" has been chairing the Vienna Ball fundraiser, which keeps me out of trouble from December through February each year.

When I'm not playing music, my husband and I love to travel. I studied in India as a Fulbright Scholar and in Guatemala as an Earth Watch volunteer. We have camped through Canada and the western U.S., have been to Europe and Mexico several times, through the Panama Canal, Norway, Hawaii, and Alaska and have more trips planned. Paleontology and astronomy are fun hobbies of ours, and we love camping and hiking. We have been married 44 years, have two wonderful children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Music continues to be a strong presence in our family.

**Kate Robbins, violin.** I grew up in Holladay, Utah, and began playing the violin at six years of age. I took lessons from Nancy Parry (a former Salt Lake Symphony member) who, luckily, lived on my street. I've always called it *my* street because it was named after my pioneer ancestors who settled the area. I miss being able to give out an address that matches my last name, and I have always loved the area where I grew up. Three years ago, I moved my family close to my old street, and still love it. I attended Olympus Jr. High and Olympus High school where I worked with great orchestra teachers. I had the opportunity to travel a few summers with the Granite Youth Symphony. After a year in Southern Utah University's music program, I took a huge break from violin to pursue an English Degree and the University of Utah (and watch a lot of Ute Basketball games!). I managed my father's chiropractic office during college, so I know a lot about back pain, headaches and health insurance. In my senior year at the U, I married Ian Robbins, whom I had known since the 7<sup>th</sup> grade.



I began to miss playing in an orchestra and after a few lessons with a great teacher and mentor, LoiAnne Eyring, I prepared for an audition. I also found that I loved teaching beginning violin students. Playing the violin has never been my only pursuit, but continually in the background of all my endeavors. These days I am completely distracted by my husband, Ian, and our 4 kids, Ivy (7,) Lulu (5,) Tucker (3,) and Andrew (1) and a small studio of young violinists. All my kids have loved coming to my Salt Lake Symphony Concerts. While I was pregnant, I could feel each kid kick me wildly during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Concerts (Thank you percussion section!), I've learned through the years that sleep is a rare luxury since I am now training for my 4<sup>th</sup> marathon in June and love other crazy things like 6am yoga classes. I consider myself lucky to have a very supportive family. I have the world's greatest husband, and someday I'll convince him to come out of retirement and play his trombone in the symphony. Right now, someone has to stay home with the kids!



**Don Abernathy, horn.** The local Jr. Hi band director asked my 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, “Who wants to be in a band?” When I raised my hand (it sounded like a good idea at the time), he asked, “What instrument do you want to play?” To this day, I still do not know why I said, “The flute!” My flute career lasted about two weeks, when I discovered Professor Harold Hill’s “Think Method” did not work. Blowing air in one end and “thinking the melody” obviously did not produce the correct results from the other end. With the beginning of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I tried again, this time on clarinet. I was *great!* I could play “Twinkle” and “Mary Had a Little Lamb” and “3 Blind Mice”. I was doing fine until the Christmas concert, and a basic flaw was discovered in my revolutionary technique – I was playing right hand over left hand. But since all I was playing were simple tunes on the upper half of the instrument, I couldn’t see what all the fuss was about. At the beginning of 7<sup>th</sup> grade (same band director), I knew what instrument that I wanted to play – the trumpet! “You don’t want to play the trumpet, they’re a dime a dozen” (his words). What you want to play is the *French horn.* “What is that?” I asked. He stepped into the locker room and brought back a very weird suitcase. Opening it up, I looked at the ugliest tangle of brass I had ever seen! “I don’t want to play that, I want to play trumpet!” (I

would not be persuaded otherwise.) “Well, take it out and try it first,” he said. Take it out? I didn’t even know where to grab it. Well, I did get a sound out of it; in fact, several—big deal. “I still want to play trumpet.” The trumpet cost (at the time) \$15 a month from the music store, the French horn was \$10 a year . . . from the school. I knew what my parent’s choice would be (they were paying), and I was correct. I made Concert Band in one semester, and first chair by the end of the year, where I remained through the rest of my school years.

I began college as a music major, but had to drop out when I began a family. For 24 years I worked in machining/manufacturing, and I am still a Class-A toolmaker/machinist. Going back to college, I earned two degrees at The University of Colorado (Music Education and Music Performance – Horn), and received my Master of Music Education from The University of Oklahoma. I began teaching in Colorado, and moved to Utah in 2001. I am currently the Department Chair at Monticello Academy, where I teach elementary music, and Instrumental music at the Jr. Hi level. I have been there for over six years now. When I have a life outside of school, I travel with my wife (mini-weekend vacations), I dabble in astronomy, am an avid film fan, compose music, hike the mountains, and, oh yes, work at home (“Honey-Do” list).

**Theresia May, cello.** I began cello studies at the age of ten at then Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho, under Dr. James McWhorter. Under his direction, I won the prestigious Emerson scholarship from the renowned Interlochen festival in Michigan, representing the state of Idaho for two consecutive seasons. Following my Interlochen studies with cellist Jeffrey Lastrapes, I traveled to Vermont and studied under the internationally known Miss Laurien Laufman, at the Weatherfield festival. This association with Miss Laufman garnered a cello performance scholarship to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where I studied with both Miss Laufman and Emilio Colon. I also performed regularly as the solo cellist with the Enescu ensemble, under the baton of Romanian maestro Sherban Lupu.

As an Illinois undergrad, I was allowed to take two honors graduate courses from the worlds’ leading Beethoven and Wagner scholars, Dr William Kinderman, and Dr. Kathrine Syer, respectively. Their encouragement to continue simultaneous studies in analysis and cello performance led to a Masters in Music Theory from the University of Utah. While there, I wrote papers in “Neo-Riemannian Tonnetz Techniques”, and “The Meaning of Gesture in Beethoven’s String Quartet, ‘The Harp’.” I presented these papers to the Yale, Harvard, and Boston University music faculty at a conference held at Harvard, and at the International Society of Music Theory Conference, held in Nashville. While at the University of Utah, I studied cello with Steve Emerson, former principal of the Utah Symphony.

I am currently co-principal of the Salt Lake Symphony under the direction of Dr. Robert Baldwin.

