

'Home' is with symphony

Music helps engineer from Sandy relax

by TSGT. TERRY L. SHAY
Public Affairs Office

The Chamber Orchestra of Honduras had just completed its concert for the evening and the musicians were putting away their instruments when two American tourists approached one of the performers.

Evidently their interest was drawn to the young man with blond hair and a build smaller than that of the string bass he was lugging about.

Now that should seem only right, because every other member of the Honduran Orchestra had jet-black hair and facial features that said they were native to the land.

"Excuse me," said one of the tourists to the bass player, "are you American?"

Second Lieutenant David A. Bakke just smiled his almost impish smile and said, "yep."

Tegucigalpa, Honduras, is a long way from home for Lieutenant Bakke. He's originally from Sandy. His wife is Kay Bakke, also a native of Sandy and former editor of The Post.

The distance from home may be reduced because of his love for music.

"Most parents want their children to be interested in music," said Bakke, "and I guess I was no exception."

"My training in music started with piano lessons when I entered fourth grade at Hoodview Elementary School in Sandy," he remembered.

"I used to sit at the piano practicing away when I really wanted to be out playing baseball and all the other things boys do at that age. Piano lessons weren't cool, but baseball was."

The young Bakke won out in the end, though, when his parents gave up on their son ever taking piano lessons seriously. The next few years were spent playing baseball, of course.

All of that changed when he entered high school and found out "kids in the band could go on band trips."

"That was a great social occasion, plus it gave me a chance to get out of the area," said Bakke. "I put two and two together and joined the band. By that time, though, I had forgotten my piano training almost completely."

"I said to myself, 'What instrument could I play?'"

"A friend said, 'Hey, there's a string bass over there. Why don't you play that thing.'"

So I picked it up and started fooling around, trying to learn how."

Now this young high school student started taking music lessons once again, only this time on the string bass.

"I took lessons, I think a few weeks, when the band director placed me in the band."

He spent the next months almost buried in the background, playing

quietly — partly so people wouldn't hear his mistakes and also to build more knowledge of the unwieldy instrument that towered a foot over him.

"The conductor's only comment was, 'Play louder!'" remembered Bakke.

After playing in the high school band a few years, Bakke's interest in music increased, as did his desire to play other instruments. He went back to "tinkering" on the piano again — probably much to his parent's delight and amazement.

"In my first year Mt Mount Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon, I became involved in their stage band," he said. "I wanted to play jazz music, and this was just the challenge I needed to get better at string bass."

His stay was short-lived, though, when he made up his mind to earn a degree in engineering. To do that, he transferred to an engineering school near Walla Walla, Wash.

The workload he faced in engineering school demanded some sort of recreational outlet. What better outlet than to play in another orchestra?

"I got into the school's orchestra and really enjoyed it, but I also found my taste in music changing from jazz and pop rock to classical," said Bakke.

Instead of listening to his large collection of pop rock 45s, he was spending more time listening to classical

works.

From there, it was a short transition to another world of music; all the while working toward his engineering degree. His education went on temporary hold, though, when he was drafted into the Army.

"I spent my Army time taking care of monkeys used in medical research at Fort Deitrich. During that time I decided I really wanted to complete my degree work, so that's what I did."

In 1973, Bakke received his degree in engineering and entered the civilian job market.

"I found a part-time job in Walla Walla as a draftsman and that's when I started playing music again."

Lieutenant Bakke dug out his musical knowledge and headed to play with the Walla Walla Symphony, which is the oldest continuously-performing symphony west of the Mississippi.

Walla Walla, Washington, gave him a reason to play string bass again, but there was the call of adventure that lured him away from Washington. That lure found Bakke in Honduras as a civilian construction engineer helping to build a much-needed hospital.

"Music," he said, "is such a universal language. The only problem is sometimes finding a place to play."

Bakke found a place to play string bass — even in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. The only problem was the

Chamber Orchestra of Honduras didn't have a complete string bass. All they had were four broken instruments.

"The conductor let me take all four string basses home and for the next few weeks I rebuilt one out of the parts from four," said Bakke.

While there, he was the only American musician in the Central American country's symphony.

Bakke returned home to America some three-plus years later. He looked, once again, for a job and found the Air Force.

Today, his work in the 317th Civil Engineering Squadron as the energy conservation coordinator for Pope Air Force Base, N.C., keeps him pretty busy. But not so much that he can't find time to pursue his favorite way to relax.

"I found another home with the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra as a string bass player," he said.

"I still stand there, string bass in hand, and 'saw away' at the music, and it's so much fun."

"The Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra is mostly volunteers, like myself, who enjoy music and need that outlet to relax," he said.

Bakke's off-again, on-again interest in music has taken him to places that would befuddle the dyed-in-wool musician, especially when he has always played "just for fun."

One thing is certain about the slender lieutenant who insists on playing a musical instrument that still towers over him like some wooden giant. Wherever he goes, he will find some way to be "standing in the background" of an orchestra "sawing away" happily.

And most likely there will be another conductor out front yelling, "play that string bass louder!"



Second Lieutenant David Bakke

Photo by Terry Shay



Bakke "saws away" during a practice session with the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra.

Hoodland fellowship to meet

The Hoodland Aglow Fellowship will host Diane Deer of Canby at its monthly luncheon on Tuesday, Feb. 26 at the Living Way Fellowship, 17275 S.E. Strauss in Sandy.

Prayer time is 11 a.m., with meeting time between 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. People are asked to bring a salad to share. Baby-sitting is provided.

For more information call 668-4972, 630-3730 or 622-4526.

Searls welcome daughter, Lisa

Butch and Janice Searls of Portland recently announced the birth of their first child, Lisa Ann.

She was born Feb. 13. She weighed 8 pounds, 7 ounces and measured 20 inches long.

Grandparents are Larry and Judy Ledin of Eagle Creek.

Great-grandparents are Jack and Lorraine Crane of Sandy and Harold and Kathryn Kitchen of Sandy.

Hoodland women plan sale

The Hoodland Women's Club, located in Zig Zag on Salmon River Road, will be holding a rummage sale on Friday, Feb. 22 and Saturday, Feb. 23 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Besides a large assortment of clothing and miscellaneous items, there will be sofas, chairs, console radio phonographs and other furniture.

"It's worth a trip just to see the county building managed by the Hoodland Women's Club and available for rental for weddings, receptions" and other events, according to Jean Stein.

The building sports a new shake roof and the interior has been refurbished. Call Shirley Deneault to inquire about renting the building. She can be reached at 622-3510 in the evenings, or 622-3131 during the day.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY FOR SALE
Suitable for Agricultural Use

Approximately 7.4 acres of unimproved agricultural land in Clackamas County, Oregon. This property is located near Sandy, Oregon, and has access and frontage from Beck Road. If you are looking to start your own nursery, or expand your present nursery, then this property may interest you. If you have ever considered owning a weekend farm to grow berries, decorative shrubs, vegetables or whatever, this property could be for you.

SEALING BID SALE: 11:00 A.M. March 20, 1985

All bids must be submitted on GSA forms which contain terms and conditions applying to this sale of property. Bid forms may be obtained at the General Services Administration, Business Service Center, Room 440, Henry M. Jackson Federal Building, Seattle, Washington 98174, telephone (206) 442-5556. Request Invitation for Bids No. GS-10-DRW-58995.

For further information and details contact:

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