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LAPD Band

BY MICHAEL ELLINGTON

The musician's story you're about to read is true. Only some of the notes have been changed to syncopate the innocent. This is about the Principal Drummer of the Los Angeles Police Concert Band. His name is Scott Firestone. He carries drumsticks.



Scott with Lompoc Symphony.

Firestone's fascination with percussion goes back to his boyhood in Van Nuys, California. The year was 1973. He was one of the hundreds of adolescent boys growing up in the heat of the San Fernando Valley. One day, 11 year-old Scott chanced upon a music store display. He saw his first drum set in the window. After three months of "beginning drum lessons," his family moved to Tarzana, where Scott joined the sixth grade concert band at Wilbur Avenue School. (It is not clear whether the family HAD to move because of his drumming. Maybe it's a coincidence.) As his proficiency grew, Scott found himself playing drums all the way through college. He has been involved with a variety of concert bands, jazz bands, marching bands and the occasional jam band.

In the late 80's, Scott interviewed with the Los Angeles City Personnel Department to join the LAPD. He has always had an interest in making a difference. Although his career path went in a different



Scott with Chief Moore.

direction, he loves the irony that played out in not becoming a police officer, but still contributing to law enforcement. In 2018, Scott joined the Los Angeles Police Concert Band, through a referral from a former band member. He is honored to be a part of the Band's support of Recruit Graduations, Presidents' Day observances at Reagan Presidential Library, and special events at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. A performance at the recent Jack Webb Gala Dinner included sharing the stage with a surprise emcee, William Shatner of *Star Trek*.

One of his passions in life is performing in musical theater. In his words, "Playing drums/percussion within a musical setting is unlike any other type of music. It is highly interactive and the coordination of all the moving parts must be timed perfectly for the show to work."

Among other productions, Scott has performed in *Hair*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Shrek*, *Beauty & the Beast*, and *Oklahoma*. He'll shortly be starting a four-weekend run of *9 to 5 - The Musical*. Of the genre, Scott says, "It is definitely more intense and adds a bit of pressure to your nightly ritual, but the reward is a

great rush of adrenaline that is felt as you play the 'bow and exit' music."

There may be an adrenaline connection between performing in musical theater and one of his other passions. Scott is a card-carrying member of American Coaster Enthusiasts, a non-profit organization focusing on the enjoyment, knowledge, and preservation of roller coasters. A recent trip to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee found Scott entering 9 to 5 star Dolly Parton's theme park, Dollywood. While there, he rode *Lightning Rod*, the park's hybrid coaster; the steel track is attached to a wooden frame structure. Scott said most coasters have an initial "lift hill" that can take as long as 1½ minutes to reach the top for the first drop. The *Lightning Rod* has a 35-MPH "launched lift hill" that rockets you up the 200-foot hill. It's on his Top Six Coaster list.

For more information about The Band, see our website at www.lasown.com and contact Jim Starr, Executive Director - email: sngcop@aol.com. For greatly appreciated donations, please go to www.lapolicefoundation.org, and in the Comments Box, put "For The Band." ♦



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Scott on percussion at Recruit Graduation.