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## LAPD Concert Band

BY CHRISTINA CHALLEY

Not only is musician Jim Scimonetti a great addition to the LAPD Band, but according to him, he is also "a splendid dinner guest!" With Jim at the dinner table, one is sure to have a fabulous conversation about woodwinds!

Jim grew up in Pacoima, Calif. At about the age of 7, Jim heard his uncle playing

some jazz records, which included Earl Bostic and Charlie Parker playing the saxophone. He was hooked on the sound, and from then on he knew that was the instrument he wanted to play. However, his path toward playing the saxophone took a little longer than he expected.

While at Charles Maclay Jr. High School, Jim's teacher, Richard Parker, struck a deal with him. Mr. Parker happened to be a young clarinet virtuoso straight out of the U.S. Air Force band. So, he obviously had a proclivity for the clarinet. But Jim really just wanted to play the saxophone. Well, the deal was, if Jim would play the clarinet for two years, he could then play the sax. Jim admits that this was the best thing that his teacher could have done, as now he can play all the woodwinds, and this would never have happened if he had just started out on the saxophone. He says, "When you learn the clarinet, you've got the hardest woodwind out of the way."

When asked which instrument he likes

best, Jim said, "Asking me which instrument I like best is like asking me which one of my children I like best. I love them all. But I guess if you told me I could only keep two, I guess I'd pick my tenor sax and bass clarinet."

Jim says he has a large extended family where almost everyone plays the drums at a professional or semi-professional level. He is the only one who loves to play woodwinds. This love has provided him the opportunity to play with such groups as Dick Dale & His Del-Tones (surf's up!), Solomon Burke, Chuck Berry, Peaches & Herb, Captain Cardiac and The Coronaries, and a lot of other bands that keep him working steadily. He's been a professional Los Angeles-based session musician and live performer since leaving the U.S. Air Force in 1972.

Jim also works at Beechler Clarinet & Saxophone Mouthpiece Co. in artist realities and quality control. He says they make professional class hand-finished clarinet and saxophone mouthpieces. Plus, he says, "It's a fun place to work!"

Jim's music vocabulary ranges from R&B, Blues and Gospel (his main loves), to Funk, Classic Rock, Smooth Jazz, Oldies Doo-whop, Big Band and Classical. He can read music as well as improvise. He loves to put life and excitement into every note he plays for the people he plays for.

As a bit of fate would have it, Jim says he was inspired when he heard the LAPD Band play at a high school assembly at Sylmar High back in 1966! He said he thought it was "the coolest thing, and they sounded great!" Now he says, "I am so blessed to be a participant and help out. I never thought I'd be part of this, but I am so glad I am."



Flute and tenor sax.

Jim is married to his high school sweetheart, Lois. They married in 1969 and live in Lancaster, Calif., where he says, "they squander every cent they make on their grandchildren."

For more information about the Band, see our website at [www.lasown.com](http://www.lasown.com) and contact Jim Starr, executive director, at [sngcop@aol.com](mailto:sngcop@aol.com). For greatly appreciated donations, please go to [www.lapolicefoundation.org](http://www.lapolicefoundation.org), and in the "Comments Box," put, "For The Band." ♦



Contra-bass flute.



Tenor sax.

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