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LAPD Concert Band

By Christina Challey

"I started playing trumpet in the sixth grade in Simi Valley, Calif. I loved it right away and would often stay at home, playing trumpet instead of going

outside. I knew I would never quit." And he never did!

Fast forward a few years, and Michael Rotman is still playing his trumpet, not only for the LAPD Concert Band, but also for various symphony orchestras, community bands, several big bands, community theaters, local churches, a German brass band founded by a German soldier in WWII, and a brass quintet that plays at Kaiser Permanente twice a month. He also performs "Taps" for deceased veterans through the "Bugles Across America" organization.

Mike's love for the trumpet led him to the music of many MGM musicals, where he would listen for the trumpets in the soundtracks. One of his favorites was "West



At an LAPD graduation class



The German Brass Band

Side Story." He was later to study with Uan Rasey, who was a first call trumpet player for MGM studios, and had played trumpet on the soundtrack of "West Side Story!" Rasey went on to teach trumpet, and some of his other students. Along with Mike, were Arturo Sandoval and Jack Sheldon.

"Peter and the Wolf," can-can, TV, movie music, the Beatles, classical music and songs he sang in synagogues were all the types of music that drew Mike into the world of music. He played in band and orchestra all through school, earned a music degree from CSULB, a teaching credential from CSUN, and taught band and orchestra in Los Angeles schools for 32 years. He taught band and orchestra to both beginning students, who had never played before, as well as those who had some prior experience. He said it was really hard work, but also a lot of fun, and he misses the kids.

One day while teaching, one of Mike's former students, **Jim Antenucci**, then an LAPD sergeant at Devonshire, dropped into his class wearing his LAPD uniform. "I didn't recognize him at first, and of course the kids were very excited to see a police officer appear in class and ask to talk to me," said Mike. "Jim introduced himself and said he remembered that I had lowered his grade in ninth grade for failing to show up and play clarinet at graduation. He knew he had been wrong and he wanted to tell me." Mike thanked



Dressed for the holidays

him and asked him to tell the class his story so they all could learn a lesson in responsibility.

Reading about WWII, Joseph Wambaugh's books and many classic novels is one of Mike's pastimes. Another is watching movies, with some of his favorites being "Double Indemnity," "Vertigo," "Chinatown" and Woody Allen movies. A favorite fictional cop is Lt. Columbo. And on the weekends, he enjoys hiking with his brother in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Mike has enjoyed playing trumpet with the LAPD Concert Band for the past three years. He says, "I'm happy supporting the police department, and it's very interesting to see the LAPD up close. The graduations are always exciting, and I'm continually impressed with the professionalism and pride of the officers I encounter." ♦

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