



The Topeka Symphony Society  
P.O. Box 2206  
Topeka, Kansas 66601-2206

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 272  
Topeka, Ks.

**It's New!**  
**Symphony Suppers**

**Phone: 785-232-2032**  
**Email: tso@topekasympphony.org**  
**Website: www.topekasympphony.org**

"Allegro" is published by the Topeka Symphony Society.

The Topeka Symphony is sponsored in part by the Kansas Arts Commission, a state agency; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; Washburn University, and ARTSConnect. The Topeka Symphony is grateful to Washburn University for the use of rehearsal and performance space.



### Fundraising Events Support Your TSO Musicians!

*Halls Night of Shopping*  
October 27, 2007

*Symphony Ball and Auction*  
February 1, 2008

Call 785-232-2032 for more information

### SAVE WITH SEASON TICKETS!

- Season packages start at \$54!
- Only one handling fee!
- Get best seat selection!
- Save 10% on single tickets and no extra fees!

or

### CONSIDER A FLEX PASS!

- Prime seats for less than a single ticket!
- Only one handling fee!
- Flexibility!
- And a perfect gift!

Contact Molly at 785-232-2032 or tso@topekasympphony.org  
[www.topekasympphony.org](http://www.topekasympphony.org)

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**PLAYER PORTRAITS  
SPECIAL EDITION**



## Music for Northeast Kansas

Volume 49, Issue 2

Topeka Symphony Orchestra  
John Wesley Strickler, Ph.D., Music Director and Conductor

September 2007

### Music in Motion 2007-2008

All concerts in White Concert Hall

**"Allegro con Brio"**  
October 6, 2007-8pm  
Masterworks I

**"Grazioso non troppo"**  
November 3, 2007-8pm  
Masterworks II

**"Dash Away, Dash Away"**  
December 5, 2007-7pm  
Discovery I

**"Sports in Music"**  
January 12, 2008-8pm  
Discovery II

**"con Fuoco"**  
February 9, 2008-8pm  
Masterworks III

**"I Love a Parade"**  
March 8, 2008-8pm  
Discovery III

**"Molto Appassionata"**  
April 12, 2008-8pm  
Masterworks IV

#### MORE TSO EVENTS!

Oct. 27: Halls Night of Shopping  
Nov. 18: Youth Ensembles Concert



### Welcome to the 2007-2008 Topeka Symphony Season!

Each new season is a time to reflect back on the last season as we begin the whirlwind of fall concerts.

#### Last season was a resounding success!

After the Topeka Symphony celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2005-2006 with ticket sales and contributions setting records, there was concern that a fall-off would occur as happened after the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated in 1995-1996. But instead, look at this:

In the season just completed, contributions from individuals and corporations were nearly equal (98.7%) to the celebratory anniversary year. Similarly, ticket sales last season were almost equal (94.5%) to the previous anniversary year.

The Topeka Symphony hosted the National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Leonard Slatkin. This fantastic sold-out concert provided significant additional income to the Symphony.

The Topeka Symphony Endowment surpassed \$1 million! This is a tremendous achievement that NO symphony of similar budget in the United States has reached (according to the American Symphony Orchestra League).

The credit for all this goes to you, the loyal patrons of the Topeka Symphony. We truly can each be proud of the level our symphony has achieved. These levels of financial support and ticket sales are only made possible by you, by your support and by your commitment.

#### So how does this affect the Symphony's new season?

Due to the fantastic year just completed, it has been possible to provide a 40% increase in the stipends of the orchestra members. Before you think the Board of Directors is becoming overly- extravagant, the Topeka Symphony was woefully below similar orchestras in what was paid our musicians. We remain below the national norm, but we are now within view of the norm, and it is significant to be able to make this major step in getting closer to the norm!

Isn't this exciting? We believe the Topeka Symphony is the 'crown jewel' of the arts in Northeast Kansas. Thank you for your support in making this possible. Enjoy the 2007-2008 season as we continue working to take the Topeka Symphony to the next level.

Larry E. Wolgast, President

### Something new this season! Symphony Suppers!

Dine with your TSO friends before each Masterworks Concert (Details coming soon)

Concert Preview with Maestro Strickler will follow

**October 6 November 3 February 9 April 12**

Mark your calendars now!

Visit [www.topekasympphony.org](http://www.topekasympphony.org) for all concert and guest artist information, photos and links  
Contact Molly at 785-232-2032 or tso@topekasympphony.org

Sponsored by the  
Topeka Symphony League

The TSO boasts an international flavor with **Zamir** Bavel, a member of the first violin section since 1978. After stints with the Israeli Symphony and the Israeli Opera, Zamir joined the TSO when the conductor was Jack Harriman. A recognized composer, the Topeka Symphony has performed several of Zamir's works. He has been playing the **violin** for 75 years, and graduated from the Music Conservatory "Shulamit" in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1947. In addition to music, math has occupied Zamir's time having earned a BS in Education, MA in Mathematics and PhD in Mathematics all from the University of Southern Illinois. Over the years, Zamir has been a teacher and assistant principal in Tel Aviv, a teaching assistant, lecturer and assistant professor in the Math Department of Southern Illinois and, since 1968, has been an assistant professor, associate professor and professor in the Computer Science Department and IPS Department at the University of Kansas. Squeezed in has been work as a mathematician with Mutual of New York Insurance Company and as a development engineer with Western Electric. Oh...one more thing...Zamir was also the Israeli National **Long Jump Champion** from 1946-1952!

**True or False: Orchestras tune to the violin  
Find the answer somewhere in this Allegro!**

This is only **Amie** Walter's second season with the TSO but she is a veteran percussionist with over twelve years experience. She graduated from Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri with a Bachelor of Arts in Music and continued to earn a Master of Arts in Education and Master of Arts in **Percussion** Performance. She has performed at several national and state conventions and has been a member of the Ottumwa Symphony and Oskaloosa Symphony Orchestras in Iowa. Amie is currently a music teacher at Jay Shideler Elementary and instructs the drumline at Washburn Rural High School. Over the years, she has worked with many high school band programs in Kansas and Missouri. For the last seven years she has been very active with the Midwestern Music Camp at Kansas University, most recently serving as **Assistant Camp Director**. Amie is an active member of the Topeka Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota which promotes women in music.

She originally was a Big Sky gal from Montana. **Donna** Mealy came to Kansas via Pacific Lutheran University in Washington state to finish her degree in violin performance at Kansas State University. Donna then spent a year as stage and house manager for the Tulsa Performing Arts Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. From there, she moved to Cincinnati to obtain her Masters in Arts Administration from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati. In 1988, Donna married husband Rob and moved to Topeka where she set up a small teaching studio and joined the TSO. After taking a few years off, she rejoined the TSO in 1997 as **Principal**

He is in his third year as **Principal Viola** for the Topeka Symphony and in his 33rd year as Professor of Violin and Viola at Emporia State University. Dr. James Starr was born in Price, Utah and raised and schooled in Salt Lake

**Violin**. Donna is an Accounting Assistant for Key Staffing and plays violin/viola gigs whenever possible. Her free time is spent designing, creating and selling original pieces of jewelry. She also enjoys playing with her cats **Joey and Snowflake** and arranging music for her string quartet.

City. **James** received his Bachelor's degree in Music Education and Master's degree in Violin Performance from the University of Utah. He auditioned and was accepted into the Utah Symphony Orchestra where he played for one year in the viola section and six years in the first violin section. The Utah Symphony, under the direction of Maurice Abravanel, toured the U.S., Europe, Greece, South and Central America during that time. Upon completion of his doctoral studies at the University of Illinois, James began his tenure at Emporia State and has been there ever since. For many years, he was a member of the Great Plains Trio, a long-time member of the American String Teachers Association and served as board member and president of the Kansas chapter. In 1995, James was awarded the **ASTA Hall of Fame Kansas Teacher of the Year** award. It is a family thing with James as he and his wife have eight children...and they all play stringed instruments. The family has played together in concerts and other engagements over the years.

One of our newer string players, **Chris** Smith, grew up in Omaha, Nebraska. Chris is beginning his second season in the second violin section and has been playing the **violin** for fifteen years. In 2003, Chris earned a Bachelors of Music Education degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. For the last two years, Chris taught high school orchestra in Waterloo, Iowa where he also participated in the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Symphony. He currently is the orchestra teacher at Junction City Middle School. The third of four boys in his family, Chris likes to sing and play the piano. His hobbies include reading and being an **avid sports fan!**

Now here's an interesting story. It involves an eighteen-year old young fellow who was introduced to music at age seven but did not continue. At age twelve, however, **Manuel** Tabora decided to enroll in the Victoriana Lopez School of Music and commit himself to the study of the violin. A native of San Pedro Sula, **Honduras**, Manuel would attend regular high school and then spend five hours a day learning to play the violin. He did this for five years. His music theory teacher in Honduras was Jose Salazar who now plays third oboe in the TSO. After Jose obtained a scholarship to attend Washburn University, he kept in touch with Manuel about Washburn and the TSO. Manuel is now attending Washburn and playing in the TSO second **violin** section. This is only his seventh year playing the violin and his second season in the orchestra. Way to go Manuel and thank you Jose! In addition to playing violin, Manuel has a passion for the bass guitar and hopes to play in one of Washburn's Jazz concerts.

Donita McLeland is in her third season as a member of the TSO's **viola** section. She played viola for 20 years having started in the fourth grade in the Salina school system. **Donita** obtained her Bachelor of Music Education from North Park University in Chicago in May of 2000. Four years later she earned a Master of Music Education from Wichita State University. Donita has worked with many orchestras including assistant director in Dodge City, Director of the Intermediate Orchestra at Wichita State University and Assistant Director in Ponca City, Oklahoma. Donita was appointed orchestra director at Seaman High School in Topeka in the fall of 2005 where she started a completely new orchestra program. Donita likes to **read and travel** and was married last July 2006.

Answer: False  
Correct Answer: Oboe

A graduate of Derby High School, **Shawn** Evans has been a **percussionist** for 20 years and a member of the TSO for 10 years. Shawn plays drumset for the Topeka Jazz Workshop and has been a percussionist in the Kansas National Guard. He works with the **drumline** at Shawnee Heights High School and is currently the manager of Hume Music Store in Lawrence.

Laura McGill is a 13-year veteran of the Topeka Symphony and plays in the second **violin** section. Her interest in the violin goes back to age nine when she was introduced to the string program at school. Coming from a family who are all in the medical field, **Laura** was the only one interested in music. Her work background has been in elementary education, teaching and reading, but she has recently earned a Masters in Public Administration from UMKC. Her goal is to work in the areas of arts and education. Laura's hobbies include reading, writing poetry, doing **yoga**, biking and playing in pit orchestras for summer musicals.

**This Allegro! represents 106 years of TSO participation**

**Symphony Brownies**

**Bake your favorite brownie recipe. Remove from oven and immediately place unwrapped "Symphony" Chocolate Bars over hot brownies. (Gently nibble on one extra bar as you bake) Cool brownies and enjoy!**

*Old family recipe from friend of the TSO in Germany:*  
Urah Guude Snaaque

It runs in the family. **Alice** Bean plays **cello** in the TSO and began lessons when she was nine years old. Her mother, who was her first teacher, had started the Northern Arizona University Preparatory School of Music and was Principal cellist of the Flagstaff Symphony. Alice has played in the TSO since 1994 and enjoys **riding her bike** and swimming. Alice is currently professor of Physics at KU.

Julie Wykert is a multi-talented person having played the **violin** since age eight and piano since age six. It comes naturally as both parents and siblings play at least one instrument. While in high school, Julie studied with Conductor Emeritus, Dr. Everett Fetter. She is a member of the second violin section and has been in the Topeka Symphony for 18 years. **Julie** attended Kansas State University and then obtained a degree in Computer Information Systems from Washburn University. She is currently employed at Security Benefit and had her second child in between concerts last season. TSO musicians are truly **dedicated!**