

Community Voices ... with Jenny Redfern: Reignite your musical passion by joining the South Valley Symphony

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By Jenny Redfern

Do you enjoy classical and pop music and movie scores? Are you one of our local hidden talents, a musician of any age who hasn't played with or for others in a while, or who is looking for a new ensemble? Are you feeling bad about letting your cherished instrument languish in its case? The South Valley Symphony invites you to give your spirit that boost that all musicians feel when they make music together. Come and play with us!

Back in 1988, I moved to Silicon Valley to work for IBM. A co-worker told me she could not meet up after work because she had to get home in time to grab her



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violin and get to rehearsal. When she heard that I, too, had been a musician in my spare time, she enthusiastically invited me to join. Her ensemble was the South Valley Symphony, a community orchestra made up of local musicians who had been making music together since 1972. Some were amateurs and some professionals. Most of them came from Morgan Hill and Gilroy.

On Wednesday evenings, they rehearsed classics, pops, and jazz, and then gave public concerts a few times a year. It sounded wonderful to me, but my French horn skills were stale and my new commute home took me in exactly the opposite direction as rehearsal. It just wasn't going to work.

Eight years later, though, we moved to Morgan Hill, and one of the first items I saw in a local calendar was "South Valley Symphony seeks musicians," including French hornists. After the move, I lived near where the symphony still rehearsed on Wednesday evenings. A friend loaned me his old Conn 8D so I could practice a bit and try out for the section. I was going to make it happen this time!

Joining the South Valley Symphony reignited my musical life, and I hope it will do the same for some of you. From my seat in the brass section, I invite interested musicians to find the joy of rehearsing and performing with Music Director Anthony Quartuccio. All of our current musicians have full lives away from music, but they make time to make music with friends. You might be in school with a crammed schedule and no time to rehearse during the day.

With heavy family or professional responsibilities, or both, you may be looking for a regular dose of musical joy to soothe your soul. Or you may just yearn for the satisfaction of playing with others.

I think it's fair to say that each of our members has found friendship and kindred musical spirits in the orchestra. Just remember: Music is life — that's why our hearts have beats.

Director Quartuccio invites all interested musicians to consider joining our musical community, especially in these sections: viola, cello, trombone, trumpet, French horn, clarinet, percussion and timpani.

The symphony pays close attention to the health and safety of its musicians and its audience as it rebuilds sections and refreshes repertoire. Musicians wear masks during rehearsals and concerts, and show proof of either COVID vaccination or regular tests.

Contact Maestro Quartuccio at orchestra@southvalleysymphony.org. Join us for rehearsals from 7:30 to 10 p.m., Wednesday evenings, from late August through May, in the band room at Solorsano Middle School in Gilroy, off Santa Teresa Boulevard. Our rehearsal and concert schedules, as well as recorded concerts, are online at southvalleysymphony.org.

We also invite those interested in supporting the symphony to consider donating or working with our Symphony Board of Directors, also explained at southvalleysymphony.org.

Jenny Redfern is a Morgan Hill resident and member of the South Valley Symphony group of musicians.