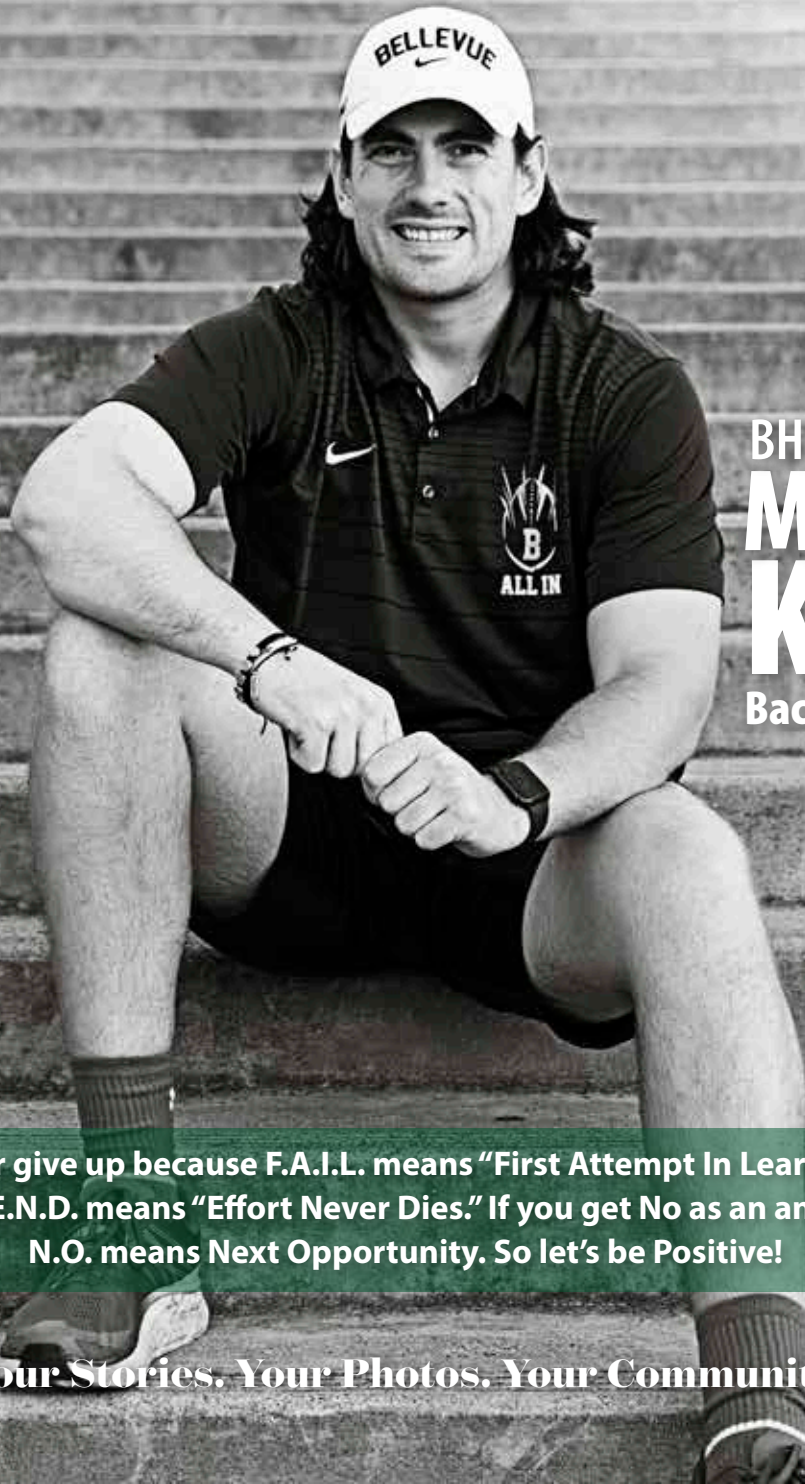


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POINTS LIVING

An Exclusive Newsletter for the Residents of The Points Communities • August 2020



BHS Football Coach
**MICHAEL
KNEIP**
Back Where He Began

Cover photo by Cecile Miller.

If you fail, never give up because F.A.I.L. means "First Attempt In Learning." End is not the end, in fact E.N.D. means "Effort Never Dies." If you get No as an answer, remember N.O. means Next Opportunity. So let's be Positive!

Your Stories. Your Photos. Your Community.

Written by: **Theodora Teodosiadis**

The Music Continues

BYSO CONDUCTOR INSPIRES FLUTISTS DURING PANDEMIC

Back in early March, things happened very quickly. First, rehearsals were canceled. Concerts were next. Unbelievably, Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra (BYSO) was looking at an abrupt end to their 55th concert season. The feeling among conductors and musicians was mostly shock. How will musicians be able to keep playing music? How will students' creativity and enthusiasm be preserved?

A short few weeks after "settling" into this new reality, BYSO announced their Growing Musicians' Virtual Garden Party in lieu of their annual fundraiser event at Bellevue Botanical Garden. Long-time BYSO Flute Orchestra conductor, Sandra Saathoff, saw this as an opportunity.

With little training on virtual music instruction, Saathoff hit the gas pedal. With the support of her colleagues, she set up her first online music lecture. A total of 35 BYSO flutists logged on that first evening. It was surprising...and more shocking that they kept coming back," says Saathoff. "The whole process was rugged and definitely not elegant. I was thrilled with how resilient and accommodating the students were."

Saathoff's aim was to create a recorded flute performance for BYSO's Virtual Garden Party. She was set on teaching two new pieces to her flutists: an arrangement of the famous "Flight of the Bumblebee" by Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov and a moving piece called "Japanese Silhouettes" by Kōsaku Yamada, which had previously never been recorded. Meeting just one hour a week over six short weeks on uncharted online territory, BYSO's flutists had to learn two pieces and record themselves perfectly for a final collaboration. Challenges were certain to arise.

Orchestral musicians are trained to follow the conductor and listen to each other. That is how they learn. When in-person rehearsals are taken away and moved to an online platform, students have to learn music very differently. Musical nuances such as dynamics, styling, and rhythm are poorly transmitted on most devices especially for the timbre of a flute. Coupled with unreliable internet connections, this becomes an uphill battle.

To overcome this, Saathoff created practice tracks, which were composed of a click-track, or metronome, layered under a music recording. For each practice track, she created three speeds: slow, medium, and at-tempo. The normally organic give-and-take in tempo and ambiguous music notations that are typically left to the artistic interpretation of the conductor had to be pre-determined to create these tracks.



Saathoff felt the flutists rose to the occasion and learned to play better and more independently in this online format. "I learned how to listen for balance and harmony. Because this recorded ensemble required me to follow tempo without visual cues, I was forced to listen for the metronome clicks and focus on how my part aligns with the rest of the ensemble," said 18-year-old BYSO flutist, Meg. For 16-year-old BYSO flutist, Dila, "The most challenging part was making sure I was playing in tune so that I would sound good as part of the ensemble."

As each week went by, student morale was arguably an additional challenge. "It [was] tough not being able to see my friends and not having school and BYSO in person," said Dila. "I missed seeing all of my friends and laughing with them about stupid things," added 14-year-old BYSO flutist Claire.

The students persevered. When asked what drives these musicians, Meg replied, "Music helps me distract myself from these stressful situations." Claire noted, "Music is my go-to activity if I want to escape reality for a bit. Like I always say, music is a remedy for the soul. It is extremely important during these hard times, when some of us feel like breaking down and that they've lost everything. I believe that music can soothe these wounds and heal our broken hearts."

With the help of an audio-visual engineer, Ron Haight, and ALRY Publications, who supplied the music and digital tools, the final flute recording was published on May 9, 2020. It was the result of one conductor's vision and an accumulation of hundreds of hours of work. It was a true success.

17-year-old BYSO flutist Daniel commented, "I remember when I saw the completed video for the first time, I was kind of blown away.



It was my first time participating in a virtually recorded ensemble project...Getting to see the final project we'd been building up to was very exciting!" Claire agreed, saying, "Our instructor (Sandra) and recording engineer (Ron) were incredibly understanding and provided a lot of great feedback for all of us, which made the whole process run quite smoothly. I thank them here for all the time and effort they have sacrificed for us and our project. Thank you!"

This recording project created the first known recording of Kōsaku Yamada's "Japanese Silhouettes," arranged for flute ensemble. Nicholas Buonanni, arranger of the piece, commented on social media, "Fantastic performance!" When asked if there was anything else Claire wanted to say about this virtual flute ensemble, she wrote, "Just three words: music never dies."

To see BYSO's flute performance, visit BYSO's homepage at byso.org and look for a Vimeo video. Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra is a nonprofit organization serving student musicians since 1964. BYSO is honored to be a vital part of the Eastside's musical community and is astounded by the resilience and dedication of our musicians. What will really get us through these difficult times is a hopeful outlook from our cultural beacons, the ability to adjust and adapt, and the faith of our younger generation in the beauty of music and working together.

Stay in the loop! BYSO audition and fall season information can be found at byso.org. Follow BYSO on Instagram @BellevueYouthSymphonyOrchestra and Facebook.com/mybyso.

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