

Performing comes naturally to flutist

Music, teaching lifelong passions for Edmonds

By Kathy Yanchus
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Susan Edmonds doesn't remember why she chose the flute, but the slender woodwind instrument has been by her side for 18 years.

"I started with piano but I wanted something more. I wanted to play something no one else I knew played. I wanted to be unique. But as it turns out," laughs the 28-year-old Milton resident, "there are lots of flute players in the world so I wasn't as unique as I thought."

Growing up in Chatham, Edmonds' parents enrolled her in the feeder band program of the Chatham Concert Band when she "begged" them to play the flute. She flourished, winning awards at the local Kiwanis music festivals and competing at the Ontario Music Festival numerous times.

At the age of seven Edmonds knew she would be a teacher and by 11, she decided on music as her teaching specialty. True to her plan, she earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, receiving several scholarships along the way, and completed her two-year Masters in flute performance and pedagogy at Memorial University in Newfoundland.

"It was the only program in Canada that offered both performance and



TOOL OF THE TRADE:

Susan Edmonds looks quite comfortable with a flute by her side.

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pedagogy in flute," she says.

Two years ago, Edmonds opened her Milton studio; her goal was to be within close proximity to large urban centres with more performing opportunities, and to establish roots in a thriving community with a small town flavour.

Already, her student roster is at 40, the majority of whom are piano stu-

dents although she teaches flute, recorder and theory. She has performed with the Burlington Concert Band and the Guelph Symphony Orchestra and accompanies the Milton Choristers. During the upcoming season, she will play principal flute with the Masterworks Orchestra and the Oakville Chamber Orchestra.

The piano is the instrument of choice for most young music students, but Edmonds hopes to increase interest in the flute. Which is the reason behind her volunteer work-

shops in schools and why local flute students were welcome to attend her recent recital free of charge. "(In the workshops) we cover basics, posture, tone production, essentials to get a good start. Sometimes I will actually play for them so they can see the potential of what the instrument can do and they get inspired. If you keep working at it, your fingers fly faster and you can make a more beautiful sound."

Performing comes naturally to Edmonds; she welcomes the opportunity to express herself musically

and keep her performing skills sharp, she says. "It's good for me to have something to work towards. I do a lot of teaching. I thrive on performing."

Although her recent recital at Milton Bible Church was a solo one, she hopes it will lead to contacts with fellow local musicians and perhaps collaborative concerts in the future.

For more information, visit www.edmondsmusicstudio.musicteaching.info.

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