

Name: Rita Mitchell

City/Town of Residence: Milwaukee

Instrument: Oboe/English Horn

How long have you been with Concord?

Since fall of 1998 – 20 years!

What is your earliest musical memory?

My earliest musical memory is listening to Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf on a vinyl record. My siblings and I listened to it a lot; the record was quite scratched up!

What got you interested in music, and what was your involvement growing up? I loved music class in grade school and was often asked to sing solos for various concerts. For my first grade Christmas concert I sang "a partridge in a pear tree" (twelve times!) as a solo for the Twelve Days of Christmas. I was very shy and nervous and I didn't tell my mother I was singing the solo. She found out at the concert. My love of music continued to grow, and I started playing the oboe at ten years old. Throughout middle and high school I sang in choir and played oboe, baritone saxophone, and clarinet in various ensembles at school. I also participated in the local youth performance groups, Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Greater Milwaukee Youth Wind Ensemble.

Why do you perform with Concord? I love playing orchestral repertoire. Being the principal oboist I have the best seat in the house, the middle of the orchestra.

What has been the high point of your involvement with Concord? It is difficult to just describe one. There are so many magical moments experienced while playing with this group. The first concert I played with the CCO is one of them. We performed the Bach Brandenburg Concerto no. 4, which has four oboes and very prominent oboe solos. That was the first concert my husband heard me play. It holds a special place in our memories.

What do you do for a living? I am a librarian, currently working for Aurora Health Care.

Tell us about your family? My husband Jim and I live in Milwaukee with our two cats, Scout and Rudy.

What are your hobbies besides practicing and playing? Cross country skiing, camping, knitting, and cooking/baking.

What is your favorite recording? I can't choose one! That is an impossible question. My favorite oboist to listen to is Alex Klein.



Who is your favorite composer? Johann Sebastian Bach

What is one thing most people don't know about you? I didn't officially ride a bicycle until I was in fourth grade. I wore out a pair of hand-me down roller skates instead.

What is your advice for kids who are interested in music? Follow your passion and practice, practice, practice. Listen to all different kinds of music a lot. Get involved and play with other musicians/groups whenever possible.