



Milwaukee Community Orchestra *Enriches Local Music Scene*

● By Margery Deutsch, Co-founder and Music Director, Milwaukee Community Orchestra

Founded in 2024 and led by UWM Professor Emerita and MYSO Music Director Laureate Margery Deutsch, and Executive Director and Associate Conductor Kari Kraenzler, the Milwaukee Community Orchestra (MCO) is quickly becoming a significant cultural asset to the greater Milwaukee area. With its mission to enrich Milwaukee's cultural landscape, MCO brings together musicians of varying ages and

backgrounds, fostering a welcoming environment where advanced beginners and skilled amateurs alike can perform and grow musically.

MCO welcomes participants aged 12 and older who possess fluency in reading music and have a passion for classical symphonic and pops repertoire. Embracing an inclusive spirit, the orchestra

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does not require auditions, aligning with its motto, "Music For Life," a testament to its dedication to nurturing a lifelong passion for music among its members.

Performances are regularly held at Homestead High School, located at 5000 W. Mequon Road. The orchestra's next concert, scheduled for July 28 at 3pm, promises an exciting program, including pieces by Liszt, Berlioz, Tchaikovsky and Korngold, alongside popular medleys from *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Selections from Wicked*.

Several MCO members are Mequon residents, emphasizing the orchestra's local ties. Horn player Laura Clausing, a Mequon resident, reflects on her positive experience with the ensemble:

"I joined the Milwaukee Community Orchestra because I wanted to regularly play with a group that chose challenging orchestral music and had great energy. Friends had invited me before, but it wasn't until I attended a concert that I realized the high caliber of the orchestra—not only in size but also in sound. Even in my first year, I've formed new friendships and have noticeably grown as a musician. Being part of MCO means I can keep playing orchestral music regularly and enjoy being part of a supportive, enjoyable community."

Gretchen Lindstrom, a violist from Mequon, also shares her insights:

"After 30 years away from playing, I was looking for an orchestra that welcomed musicians of all abilities without the pressure of auditions. MCO provided exactly that. Playing in such a vibrant community orchestra, particularly one with an impressive viola section of 20 players, is an unmatched experience. Being part of MCO keeps my mind active, and Margery's focus on encouraging all musicians to 'Just Keep Playing' truly makes this orchestra unique. I doubt there's another community orchestra quite like ours anywhere in the country."

Sara Pahl, another viola from Mequon, has high praise for the group as well!

"I joined MCO because I wanted a fun, friendly place to play, and I absolutely found it! MCO is by far the most joyous orchestra I have ever played in, and I just love it!"

For more information on joining, upcoming events, and tickets, visit the Milwaukee Community Orchestra's official website at www.mkeorch.org, or follow them on Facebook. For ticket purchases and further inquiries, contact mkeorch@gmail.com



Gretchen Lindstrom, Sara Pahl and Laura Clausing



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N144 W5800 Pioneer Rd.
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larosalandscap.com
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