Meet the Musicians

The Big Note

Victoria Kintner Griswold, author & violin
Victoria is a violinist and she writes the stories and books for the Teddy Bear Series. Using her imagination to introduce instruments to children is her favorite thing to do. She started the violin when she was 8 and has played many fun concerts with the ISO and other orchestras. Victoria loved the swings, hot fudge sundaes, and finger-painting when she was in Kindergarten. Her favorite music from The Big Note is Butterflies. The flute sound makes her think of the beautiful butterflies in her garden.

Mike Muszynski, bassoon
Mike is a bassoonist with the ISO who has two young children who are frequent audience members for the Teddy Bear Series. He started playing bassoon when he was 12 years old and loves playing bassoon for both of his kids, helping them to dance, since, and even fall asleep. His favorite part of playing The Big Note is “In the Hall of the Mountain King” because he gets to play like a runaway train conductor. When he was in elementary school, he used to lead his friends in parades around the backyard singing songs like “You’re a Grand Old Flag” and other patriotic marches.

Derek Reeves, viola
Derek Reeves started playing the violin at the age of 2-1/2 and then later learned viola. He teaches children both violin and viola and has played in many orchestras, in addition to the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. His favorite thing about Kindergarten was story time! He still enjoys hearing and reading stories, even to this day!
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**Alistair Howlett, flute**
Alistair was born in Sydney, Australia. He started playing piano when he was five and began the flute when he was eight years old. Alistair’s favorite activities in kindergarten were crafts, story time and playing outside with friends! Alistair has a son, Elliott, who loves the *Teddy Bear Series*. Alistair loves playing music and hopes that you will enjoy all the wonderful music and stories you will be hearing through the *Teddy Bear Series*.

**Tony Kniffen, tuba**
Tony’s favorite piece from *The Big Note* is “Morning Mood”, because his lovely wife Amy has played the melody at many live performances and he gets to listen! Tony and Amy have three tall kids together and none of them play an instrument, but one sings lovely tunes around the house. Another one of his children makes his favorite dessert frequently - cookies! He got his start in music way back in preschool when he sang along with John Denver on the car radio all the time! In the 6th grade he started on trumpet and went down the list through baritone horn and trombone before starting on the tuba quite late - the 11th grade! One of Tony’s favorite things about being a musician is traveling. He has been to 10 different countries and spent 10 summers in the Rocky Mountains. His first orchestra job was in Honolulu, Hawaii!