



BRAZOS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

SPRING

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Ken Cockerham, Trumpet

When Ken Cockerham was in the 4th grade, he chose the trumpet for his instrument and never considered any other. At the time, his family lived in Springfield, VA, which is close to Washington, DC, where in the 5th grade, he took private lessons from a trumpet player in either the Air Force or Marine Band that was stationed in Washington. As a young child, Ken did not know enough to appreciate what a fabulous teacher he had, but remembers that they used an Arban book and that they had a lot of fun.

In the 6th grade, Ken played a solo in the spring concert with the high school band accompanying him. What great progress in such a short time and Ken considers this one of the high points of his career—exciting for sure for a young boy.

The next year, Ken's family moved to Richmond, VA, where he played in the band throughout high school. After graduation, he chose to attend Baylor University to major in Music Education. Once he got to Texas, he never left—he met a beautiful, talented Texan pianist whom he married soon after graduation, and 47 years later, they remain madly in love and have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

Ken retired after a long career with Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth, where he was a buyer/contracts negotiator. He bought avionics for the F16, F22,

Greetings

This April will showcase the Brazos Chamber Orchestra's final series of concerts for the 2025-2026 season. Be sure to attend at least one of the concerts in Cleburne (April 20), Burleson (April 26), or Granbury (April 27). Each performance is free.

Your next opportunity to enjoy a performance of highly talented musicians will be in October when BCO begins its 2026-2027 season.

Since America is celebrating its 250th Anniversary this year, BCO is proudly presenting patriotic and Americana music for this Spring Concert.

Jennifer Hunter, Principal Flute

Jennifer Hunter—flute player, flutist, flautist, *flautista*—take your pick—grew up surrounded by music and art. Her mom is an artist and her dad, a musician. He is a tuba player who still performs. He took a multi-decade hiatus from pursuing a music career to become a pilot and raise his family, but he never stopped gigging on trip layovers. Now, he frequently subs in various ensembles in the DFW Metroplex.



Jennifer taught herself the recorder after stealing her older brother's Yamaha recorder and music book. This was her gateway to playing the flute.

She also plays other members of the flute family, including piccolo and alto flute. You can hear Jennifer featured when BCO performs John Philip Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever*. Jennifer likes playing all the fast notes; she adds the more notes, the better. She says, "The piccolo is meant to be heard, and composers love writing those crazy, high, wild runs for the little beast."

Before entering beginning band in 6th grade, it was decided that Jennifer would play the French horn. Only one problem: she did not want to play a brass instrument. Jennifer's parents got a French horn from the school for her to start learning over the summer, but it sat in the corner the entire time.

F35, and C130. Often, his job took him to manufacturing sites to inspect the facilities and negotiate deals. His career has taken him around the world to Israel, Turkey, Belgium, Singapore and England. He has also traveled to many places within the USA.

Ken says he chose the trumpet because he wanted to play the melody. He soon found out that in an orchestra, the melody gets passed around a great deal. Sometimes when you look up at the trumpet section, they may look bored. But you can bet that when the trumpets begin playing, you will hear them loud and clear.

Ken has played off and on with the BCO for a few years, but became a regular member in 2022. The BCO provides the opportunity to play with very good musicians and perform a wide array of styles and types of music. "As a Christian, it is meaningful that each concert starts with *The Majesty and Glory of Your Name* and that the program often includes a hymn arrangement."

Ken enjoys the format of taking the music to Bursleson, Cleburne, and Granbury—getting to play the music three times for different audiences is a real pleasure. Ken says, "Bringing together talented musicians to rehearse and perform a wide variety of music for three communities brings us all closer together." Ken believes in and supports the mission of the BCO—Lightening the Heart, Stimulating the Mind, and Nourishing the Soul. He adds, "We feel, see, and hear this mission whenever we perform."

On the first day of beginning band, the director went around to make sure each student was assigned the correct instrument. When she got to Jennifer, she told the director that she needed to return the French horn because she was going to play flute. The director said she had to produce a sound on the flute before she would allow the switch. When Jennifer's mom picked her up after school that day, she said they had to go to the music store because she needed to learn how to play the flute that night—the rest is history.

Jennifer views her flute as an extension of who she is, and has a habit of buying new head joints made from various types of wood for her piccolos—they each produce a different sound and serve a unique purpose.

Jennifer has been with Brazos Chamber Orchestra for about 10 years and is also the principal flute player with the Mesquite Symphony Orchestra.

Jennifer says she loves playing and performing, and that she feels the most at home whenever she's making music. She adds, "It gives my life meaning and purpose."



BCO Trumpet Section

From the left: Scott McClean, Principal Trumpet; Cara Pollard; Ken Cockerham



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