

Marching To A Beat

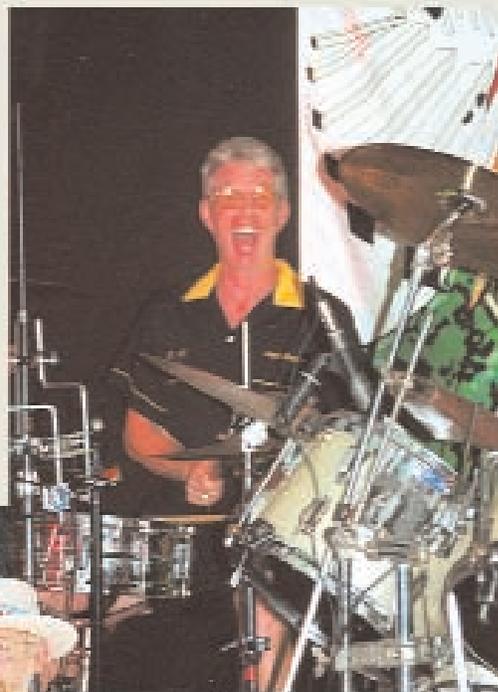
Pat O'Donnell makes giving
a sweet, sweet song.

Pat O'Donnell is grateful for a lot of things, but certainly near the top of his list are: 1) the opportunity to sell products that help clinicians take better care of people, and 2) the ability to pound out rhythm to spectacular Motown music. He's been doing both for quite a while.

Born and raised in Jefferson City, Mo., O'Donnell played the alto sax in grade school, then the

baritone sax at Jefferson City High School. He was drum major for his high school band when they performed at the New York World's Fair in 1965. But his first musical love is the drums, which he began playing for a neighborhood group in 1960.

O'Donnell graduated from Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Mo., in 1969 with a degree in public relations. He joined the U.S. Coast Guard



and served as a photojournalist and public relations specialist. He worked primarily with the Coast Guard's Boating Safety branch in San Francisco, educating recreational boaters about water safety and the Coast Guard's role in rescuing people and the environment (in the case of natural disasters, such as oil spills).

Upon his discharge from the Coast Guard in 1974, O'Donnell interviewed and obtained a medical sales job with Davol Inc., a Providence, R.I.-based company with a focus on urologicals and wound management products. (Daval is now a subsidiary of C.R. Bard Inc., Murray Hill, N.J.) For Davol, he called on distributors in metropolitan St. Louis, southern Illinois and southeastern Missouri. Among his accounts was Midwest Medical (now MMS). In 1979, he joined Midwest as a sales rep.

Today, he works for MMS' specialty division, calling on hospitals and clinicians in metropolitan St. Louis, southern Illinois, and south and east Missouri. His product lines are primarily mother-and-baby products, that is, those used in labor and delivery, and neonatal ICU.

Repertoire: Why did you make the transition from manufacturer to distributor sales rep in 1979?

O'Donnell: I'm not real fond of hopping on airplanes, and as an area manager with Davol, I was performing a lot of (management duties). I love carrying a bag, and Midwest gave me the opportunity to do just that. The company was fairly new and was exploding at the time.

Rep: How did you get interested in music?

O'Donnell: My parents didn't play instruments, but they loved music. In Jefferson City, in the basement of the Governor's Hotel, there was a club called the Rathskeller. By the time I was 7 or 8, my parents started dragging me there to see the trios and quartets — primarily popular and jazz groups — playing there. We would sit in the booth next to the

band and watch the musicians.

Jefferson City was home to Lincoln University, one of the first land grant universities, which was predominantly black when it first opened (in 1866). All of the big jazz groups would come there for concerts. I saw Count Basie, Woody Herman, Dave Brubeck and Oscar Peterson. Mom and dad would pick me up, and we would go. So I was sur-

rounded by music — jazz and big band.

I started playing alto sax in junior high. In high school, I played baritone sax with the stage band and marching band. Then, in 1960, my cousin and some neighborhood guys formed a rock-and-roll band. I played sax a little bit. My cousin was the drummer, but he would never show up for practice. The drums were there, so I switched over.



Next to skin,
there's nothing better.

Hy-Tape[®], the Original Pink Tape[®], is flexible, waterproof and washable. Its unique zinc oxide base soothes the most delicate skin while remaining firmly adhered, even under the most adverse conditions. And Hy-Tape always removes easily and safely, without skin trauma or discomfort. For patients both young and old, trust Hy-Tape next to their skin. There's nothing better.

The Original Pink Tape[®]
HY-TAPE
Latex Free

P.O. Box 540, Patterson, NY 12563-0540 • Toll-Free: 1-800-246-0101
Fax: 645-676-4104 www.hytepec.com



My first paying gig was in 1963 with a Jefferson City band called the Road Runners. The group had a 21-, 22- and 23-year-old guy, and then me. I was 15. They would have to pick me up for practice, because I couldn't drive. We weren't that far from Fort Leonard Wood, so we would play there — just local teen and school parties. While I was with the Road Runners, I traded in my alto sax; one of the guys in the band co-signed for me to buy a set of drums — red sparkle Ludwig drums and a chrome snare. I'm still playing that original set.

The year I went to college — 1965 — was around the time of the Four Tops, the Temptations and the Supremes. It was Motown and rhythm and blues. I just fell in love with it; it was my music. The English Invasion was underway, and Hendrix and Joplin just didn't scratch my itch. But Motown R&B did. So I posted 3-by-5 index cards all over school with a note, "Drummer wants to form R&B — not rock and roll — band."

I got real lucky. One night, I heard a band practicing in the field house. I liked the way they sounded, so I stood and listened for a while. That weekend, I was doing my laundry in the laundromat, and I saw the guy who had been playing the guitar earlier that week. I said, "I really like your band." He said, "I don't have a band." He had been filling in for someone. I said, "I'm Pat O'Donnell, the guy who put the 3-by-5 cards all over school." He and I shook hands, introduced ourselves. He was James Thompson. Together, we

“One day, a young lady he worked with asked if he could play for her wedding. So James picked the bass player, rhythm guitarist, myself and a female friend of ours on piano and we played the wedding. We became known as ‘Simply Us’”

found a bass player and keyboard player and started a band called JT and the Group. After a period of time, we added a horn section and became The Magnificent Seven. We played R&B and Motown music together till 1969, when we got out of college.

While I was in the Coast Guard, I didn't play anything. But when I went to St. Louis for Davol in 1974, I joined the musician's union. I filled in with some bands, but didn't play routinely. I looked up James, who had a disco/R&B group called the Third World. He already had a drummer, so I played percussion — timbales, conga drums, cowbells. One day, a young lady he worked with asked if he could play for her wedding. Well, Third World was a nine-piece band that did nothing in the wedding genre. So James picked the bass player, rhythm guitarist, myself and a female friend of ours on piano, and we played the wedding. We became known as Simply Us. From that one wedding,

Simply Us played together until 1988, when James was transferred to Chicago. We did weddings and private gigs. This was before DJs, so people still had live music for their weddings.

Backing up a minute: While we were in college, we used to play at a resort in Missouri called Lake of the Ozarks. We played at a dinner club called The Cabaret. Later, in 1982, when I was with Simply Us, I got a call from a fellow, Jim Moore, whom I had not seen since 1969 (in Lake of the Ozarks). He was calling musi-

cians who had worked at the Lake for a reunion. So 12 or 13 of us met in somebody's house on the lake. We jammed all afternoon, and told war stories. Some had been in and out of Vietnam, others had gotten married and divorced. People were stopping their boats to listen to our music. When the party was over, we slapped each other on the back and disappeared.

Six months later, though, Jimmy called back and said "We're doing it again." But this time, he wanted us to show up early, so we could practice. He had booked us at the local Lions Club. A hundred and thirty people showed up to see us; we donated the proceeds to Jerry's Kids. We did the same thing once a year for the next 22 years. We became known in Lake of the Ozarks as Super Session. At one point, we had a nine-piece horn section and 20 people on stage. Two thousand people would show up to see us. We did old rock and roll, Motown, rhythm and

blues. We hooked up with Wonderland Camp for mentally challenged kids and adults, and donated our proceeds there for the last 12 years. Then Jimmy passed away from cancer, and we lost two other musicians who were very close to us, so we stopped.

Two years ago, I called up James (Thompson) in Chicago and asked if he would be interested in playing once a month in St. Louis, if I could find some musicians. He said yes. So I got the old bass player and rhythm guitarist from Simply Us; and added another rhythm guitarist, two female singers and a keyboardist, who is a general surgeon. Our band — 8 Track: The Oldies Band — has been together almost two years. We play private venues, some of the wineries, the riverfront in Washington (Mo.), and an annual fundraiser called the Beans and Rice Ball, which helps support a medical mission the



O'Donnell (left) and Steve Derhake

surgeon goes to (in Central America) once a year. We play old rock and roll, rhythm and blues, and Motown; and we've kicked in a little disco.

Rep: Do you have any favorite drummers?

O'Donnell: Buddy Rich, who I saw play live; Jake Hanna, who played with Woody

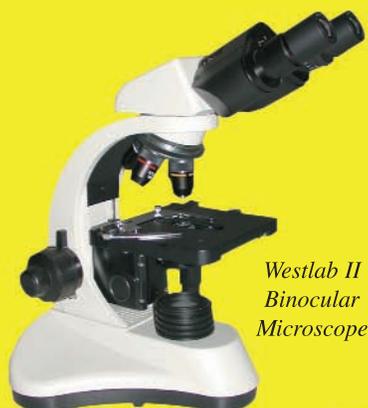
Herman; the drummer for Doc Severenson's band. The stuff that came out of Detroit back in the Sixties was incredible. There was a band called the Funk Brothers who played in the studio for Barry Gordon (founder of Motown Records).

Rep: Do your customers know about your avocation?

O'Donnell: Quite a few do; it's something I share. They've come out to watch us play at some of the wineries, and I've also played for some customers' weddings.

I've been blessed my whole life. It's a true gift to be able to represent products that give patients better care and help clinicians do their jobs easier and better. To be a giver and make a living at it is kind of special, and the medical field offers that. **rep**

Your best source for magnification.



Full spectrum of microscopes
Over 50 years of experience
Outstanding Customer Service
Limited Lifetime Warranty

SEILER
PRECISION MICROSCOPES

Toll-free: (800) 489-2282

Local: (314) 968-2282

Fax: (314) 968-3601

E-mail: micro@seilerinst.com



www.seilerinst.com