Pizza Wednesday

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Title: Pizza Wednesday
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Informant: Eric Walker is a graduate student studying Trombone performance at University of Northern Colorado. He is from Kaysville, UT, and he went to Davis High School. He completed his bachelor’s degree in Music Education while attending USU. This is where he and I met. Eric Walker is married with no kids. He is a member of the Church or Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Eric is a pretty friendly guy, and he has a really goofy way of interacting with people. He’ll often make quirky comments in a muffled voice with a wry smile.

Context: I posted on Facebook asking if about food related traditions. Eric responded and told me about Pizza Wednesday. I sent him a message using Facebook Messenger to get more information. Eric and I had one year of school together during Fall 2016 and Spring 2017 semesters. Following the Spring 2017 semester he moved to Colorado to attend school at University of Northern Colorado. We had this conversation over Facebook Messenger while Eric was in Colorado and I was in Logan. Eric started Pizza Wednesday with fellow low brass graduate students (a bass trombonist and a tuba player) in between rehearsals. They got pizza from a local place and ate it in the lobby on campus of where they rehearsed. The day of the weekend they observed this tradition – Wednesday – was chosen because of the break they had in between rehearsals.

Text:

It started last year when one Wednesday me and two other grad students decided to get lunch between studio classes and our orchestra rehearsal. We decided to try a pizza place that’s around the corner from the concert hall where the rehearsals were held, and when we got there we realized there wasn’t a dining area to sit and eat. But they had a deal offering a $5 deal on an extra large pizza for only ten bucks, so we got one and took it over to the concert hall and ate it in the lobby. It was great pizza and it was plenty big enough for the three of us, and we decided to keep doing it every Wednesday between studio class and orchestra, and we each took a turn paying for it every three weeks. It was a pretty good system and we got a good lunch every week and only had to pay for it every three weeks.

The orchestra director always arrived while we were in the middle of eating, and he greeted us every time he saw us. Eventually he caught on that it was a weekly thing that we were doing.

One day during rehearsal, he got on a tangent about how we as an orchestra should be building camaraderie with each other, and he brought up Pizza Wednesday as an example. Immediately after he had like 10 people ask to join us, and although it was a bit annoying at times with how much more complicated it became, it was a lot of fun every week and it became one of the highlights of the week for all of us involved.

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Texture: Eric was my drum major in marching band for my first year of college. Because of that, I knew exactly who he was, but we weren’t exactly close friends, and we never really hung out. I think this is the first time that Eric and I have every communicated electronically. This led to our conversation having more of the feeling and attitude of a report, rather than a casual conversation; Eric and I never really had casual conversations. Low brass instrument players have a specific camaraderie about them: they often have hundreds of measures of rests, really
uneventful parts, and sometimes they aren’t even included in an orchestra. Because of this, low brass players almost feel like they fit into a kind of “club.” So, it makes a lot of sense to me that this is a tradition that would be started by low brass players.