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WestMIJazzSociety

Is your membership  
up for renewal?  
This could be your  
last issue!



Photo by: Bruce Robey

## The Heart's Music: Who's Tribute Is This?

On the first summer's day in May, in a tranquil rolling hills setting, we arrived a little early, not necessarily anticipating any kind of captivation.

We registered, met others, located our table, watched the musicians amiably setting up and talking, got a drink, and eventually found our seats. The room was so festively decorated with balloons, candles and table bling by Peni and her crew. How pleasant to see so many musicians in the crowd. There were two or three generations of musicians, four generations of Colley family and friends, and even more generations in the audience to be encouraged, sustained and lifted. Would that portend something unusual? How special would tonight be?

The musical group was a wonderful interplay of competencies and ages:

- Terry Lower, pianist and composer.

An improvisational genius that has performed here and abroad for over 30 years.

- Diego Rivera: composer and arranger, and Assistant Professor of Jazz Saxophone and Improvisation at MSU. Like our honoree, he has a leadership commitment to educating young jazz musicians.

- Ethan Erickson, Bass: Byron Center HS graduate and former student of Max Colley III, currently a sophomore at MSU.

- Tim Froncek: one of the busiest drummers in west Michigan, who teaches private students, lectures on the history of jazz, and is currently musical director of two premier big bands.

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**Jazz At the Zoo  
begins June 9th  
with the first of  
10 free Monday  
night concerts**



Vermont", "El Pachuco" and "The Unsaid" to "Beautiful Friendship", "Cain and Abel" and "Indeed I Do". Max played the drums as well as the trumpet. The group's presentation was diverse, outstanding musicianship, obviously from the heart.

The crowd was warm and welcoming. A proud pop was obviously pleased, a large family was giving encouragement and support,

and Max's students were looking at each other with big smiles when he played his horn. The night was happy and mellow and dripping with admiration, especially for the honoree.

Max talked passionately about the power of music to stop wars and bring peace (Louis Armstrong in Africa), the subtlety needed to teach (Eric Thorne interfering with his piano's sustain pedal), and the joys of so many "families" with which to connect. Throughout the night, both verbally and musically, he paid tribute – as he always does – to those who preceded and helped him as a man and as a musician.

- Eve Renee: a vibrant nonagenarian and smooth stylist who along with her husband – Count Fisher - became an acknowledged jazz legend in Indiana before moving to GR to perform.

- And the impeccable Max Colley III: a quiet evangelist for humility, decency, admiration, respect and impassioned musicianship.

Sweet, spicy, traditional, new, up-tempo, slow: the night's music was a mélange of immaculate interpretation: from "All the Things You Are" and "Sentimental Journey" to "Moonlight in





It was a great night:

- Because volunteers did an excellent job of organizing and managing the event
- Because of a wonderful room made festive
- Because of the admiring company of 120 or so enthusiasts
- Because of the gracious service and good food
- Because there was a (family) celebration within a celebration
- Because we could witness unabashed humility, love and reverence for the creative process, its practitioners and results.
- Because we experienced the essence of jazz...impeccable musicianship whereby those who have not played together improvise to create sheer genius.

Art, Carolyn, Lars, Steve and Pete

*All Photos by: Bruce Robey*



## EDITOR'S NOTE



*During her many years in managing the West Michigan Jazz Society, Betty Forrest edited and was a frequent contributor to our Newsletter. Betty was an excellent writer, and one of the things she did was to periodically give a book review about the lives of jazz musicians. Several years ago, Betty gave me copies of her reviews and asked that I organize them for future possible use. We have done that, and it seemed to me that it might be fun to publish a review in the Newsletter from time to time. You can find the first article in this edition, and I would welcome comments on the subject.*

*John Miller*  
Editor

## SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The West Michigan Jazz Society has a tradition of awarding scholarships to help students continue their study of jazz music. This year we had a record number of applications from area students, and will be giving six \$1,000 awards. Following is a list of those who have been selected. Also included are their high school and the college they will be attending. We will publicly acknowledge them at our Jazz At The Zoo program on June 30th. We were most impressed by their accomplishments and wish them the best in their future musical studies.



<b>Madison George</b>	<b>Home Schooled</b>	<b>Western Mich</b>	<b>Drums</b>
<b>Lucas Keur</b>	<b>Northview HS</b>	<b>Central Mich</b>	<b>Sax</b>
<b>Joseph Morris</b>	<b>Northview HS</b>	<b>Cedarville U</b>	<b>Tuba/Bass</b>
<b>Ryan Sloan</b>	<b>Vicksburg HS</b>	<b>Western Mich</b>	<b>Trumpet</b>
<b>Kyle Wheeler</b>	<b>Byron Center HS</b>	<b>Western Mich</b>	<b>Drums/others</b>
<b>William Wright</b>	<b>Home Schooled</b>	<b>Aquinas</b>	<b>Trombone</b>



# W.M.J.S. Jazz at the Zoo June lineup!

**June 9** Byron Center HS Jazz Orchestra  
An award winning high school jazz band,  
led by Marc Townley.



The Jazz Orchestra has performed with many of the greatest jazz musicians in the world. These musicians have included Aaron Diehl, Wess "Warmdaddy" Anderson, Marcus Printup, Wycliffe Gordon, Herlin Riley, Diego Rivera, Etienne Charles, Michael Dease, Rodney Whitaker, and Antonio Hart. They were one of only 12 high school jazz bands from across the country, and the only one from Michigan, selected to participate in Savannah Georgia's ninth annual Swing Central Jazz High School Band Competition and Workshop.



**June 16** The PLANET D NONET is a down & dirty little swing band from Detroit playing the classic swing music of Ellington & Strayhorn, Fletcher Henderson, Count Basie & Benny Carter as well as more modern jazz by Sun Ra and Pharaoh Saunders...always with a Detroit twist. The Planet D Nonet is about swing, blues, space age jazz and classic American songs all served up with plenty of good humor.

Planet D Nonet is Detroit's award winning swing band founded in 2007 by RJ Spangler and James O'Donnell. The "D" in the name stands for Detroit, and "Nonet" is a group of nine.

In 2013 PD9 garnered a Detroit Music Award for Best Jazz CD in 2011 & Best Traditional Jazz Band.

**A hearty welcome  
to our new and  
returning members!**

## **NEW MEMBERS**

*Paul & Marti Arnold*

## **RENEWING MEMBERS**

*Gordon & Rosemary Drummond*

*Doug Hannink & Jocelyn Shaw*

*Art & Ruth Howson*

*Jim James*

*Francis & Marion Lamb*

*Ms. Bucky Love*

*Hank & Diane Milanowski*

*John & Mary Panfil*

*Milt & Judy Sernick*

*Elizabeth L.D. Smith*

*Van Swets*

*John VanDenBerg*

# W.M.J.S. Jazz at the Zoo

## June lineup!

*June 23*

**Wonderland Jazz Ensemble**  
A local band led by  
composer/sax man  
Tom Elferdink



This multi-award winning, multi-instrument playing bundle of talent will lead this sextet and bring to our stage some of the nation's finest musicians. Featured on piano is Dan Karlsberg, on bass is Steve Whipple, John Hill on drums, David Jensen on trombone and James Hughes on saxophones.

Led by composer/saxophonist Tom Elferdink, they have recently released their first CD,

*A Wish*, which is garnering rave reviews. This dynamic group blends traditional jazz with original composition and innovative arrangements.

Ken Morgan - reeds,  
Eric Thorne - piano,  
Jeff Beaven - bass,  
Larry Ochiltree - drums.



*June 30*

**Max Colley III Sextet**  
Our 2014 Jazz Musician  
of the Year leads an  
all star cast.

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If you have questions, please call WMJS (616-490-8506) or email us. (wmjsgr@gmail.com)

*Thank you for sharing the joy of jazz with our community!*



# June Jazz Around Town

## Sunday, June 1

GR Jazz Orchestra, with Edye Evans Hyde at Founder's Brewery, 5:30 -7:30 pm

## Monday, June 2

John Shea at Republic, 8-11 pm

## Wednesday, June 4

Greg Miller at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
Earlie Braggs/ Trombone Jazz Trio at Clara's in Battle Creek, 44 S. Camly St. 269-963-0966, 6-10pm

## Thursday, June 5

Bob Van Stee at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
Jazz West Ensemble at Book Nook, Montague, 7-9 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 6-10  
Terry Lower w/ Kelly Broadway, vocalist at Clara's in Battle Creek, 6-10pm

## Friday, June 6

Robin Connell at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at JW Marriott, 6-10 pm  
Art & All That Jazz in Downtown Douglas, 6-8 pm  
Bridge St. Band at Royal Jazz Opus, 606 Bridge St., 8-11 pm  
Kathy Lamar at Malarky's, 7-10 pm  
Terry Lower w/ Kelly Broadway, vocalist at Clara's in Battle Creek, 6-10pm

## Saturday, June 7

Monica Da Silva at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at Noto's, 7-10 pm

## Sunday, June 8

GR Jazz Orch., with Edye Evans Hyde, GR Festival

## Monday, June 9

**JAZZ AT THE ZOO!** 1300 W. Fulton, Byron Center HS  
Jazz Orchestra 6:30-8:30  
John Shea at Republic, 8-11 pm

## Tuesday, June 10

Chris Lawrence / Pike and Eel at the Winchester, 9:30 pm 12:30 am

## Wednesday, June 11

Freddy De Gennaro at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
Libby York w/ Mark Kahny at GVSU, CD Release Party, (free, but must reserve by June 2nd , 616.331.2176)  
5:30-8 PM Hors D'oeuvres and drinks , hosted by Nancy Giardina

## Thursday, June 12

Steve Talaga at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
The 'Out'Side Organ Trio at Book Nook, Montague, 7-9 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 6-10 pm  
Mary Rademacher, Rick Reuther & the Hagen's at Greenville 7-9pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle Creek, 6-10 pm

## Friday, June 13

Steve Talaga & Mary Rad at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at JW Marriott, 6-10 pm  
Bridge St. Band at Royal Jazz Opus, 606 Bridge St., 8-11 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St, Saugatuck, 7-11pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle Creek, 6-10 pm

## Saturday, June 14

Paul Lesinski at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at Noto's, 7-10 pm  
Steve Hilger & Trio Jazz at Grille 111, Rockford, 6-9 pm

## Monday, June 16

**JAZZ AT THE ZOO!** 1300 W. Fulton, Planet D Nonet, 6:30-8:30  
John Shea at Republic, 8-11 pm



**Tuesday, June 17**

Chris Lawrence / Pike and Eel at the Winchester,  
9:30 pm - 12:30 am

**Wednesday, June 18**

Michael Drost at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm

**Thursday, June 19**

Paul Lesinski at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
Checkers Morton at Book Nook, Montague, 7-9 pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle  
Creek, 6-10 pm

**Friday, June 20**

Robin Connell at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at JW Marriott, 6-10 pm  
Bridge St. Band at Royal Jazz Opus, 606 Bridge St.,  
8-11 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 7-11 pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle  
Creek, 6-10 pm

**Saturday, June 21**

Roger Mac & Tami Hjelm at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at Noto's, 7-10 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 7-11 pm

**Sunday, June 22**

Mark Kahny & Bob Thompson at What Not Inn,  
Fennville, 6-10

**Monday, June 23**

**JAZZ AT THE ZOO!** 1300 W. Fulton, Wonderland Jazz  
Ensemble 6:30-8:30  
John Shea at Republic, 8-11 pm

**Tuesday, June 24**

Chris Lawrence / Pike and Eel at the Winchester,  
9:30 pm - 12:30 am  
"THE ART OF JAZZ" a benefit for United Methodist  
Community House w/ Edye Evans Hyde, City Flats  
Hotel, 7:00 pm

**Wednesday, June 25**

Greg Miller at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm

**Thursday, June 26**

Brad Fritcher + Trois at Book Nook, Montague, 7-9 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 6-10 pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle  
Creek, 6-10 pm

**Friday, June 27**

Steve Talaga at Mangiamo's, 7-10 pm  
John Shea at JW Marriott, 6-10 pm  
Bridge St. Band at Royal Jazz Opus, 606 Bridge St.,  
8-11 pm  
Mark Kahny at Marro's, Water St., Saugatuck, 7-11 pm  
Terry Lower w/ Edye Evans Hyde at Clara's in Battle  
Creek, 6-10 pm

**Saturday, June 28**

Steve Talaga & Diana VandeWater at Mangiamo's,  
7-10 pm  
John Shea at Noto's, 7-10 pm  
Mark Kahny, Mark Weymouth & Edye Evans Hyde at  
What Not Inn, 7-11 pm  
Edye Evans Hyde w/ Mark Kahny & Evan Hyde at What  
Not Inn, Fennville 7-11 pm

**Sunday, June 29**

Gayle Kolb w/ Jim Cooper on Vines, What Not Inn,  
Fennville 6-10 pm  
Mary Rademacher & the Rad Pack at Reuther Pavilion,  
Canadian Lakes, 7-9 pm

**Monday, June 30**

**JAZZ AT THE ZOO!** 1300 W. Fulton, Max Colley Sextet,  
6:30-8:30 pm  
John Shea at Republic, 8-11 pm

*Be sure to check for additions  
and changes on our website,  
[www.wmichjazz.org](http://www.wmichjazz.org),  
WMJS's Facebook, the venues  
as well as the musician's  
websites*



# *Louis Armstrong*

Betty Forrest researched many books  
and the internet for this article

Pick up any book or article on jazz and within a few pages there is likely to be a reference to Louis Armstrong. His lasting impact on the evolution of jazz is uncontested.

To quote one of his well-known disciples, Wynton Marsalis, when asked what puts Armstrong in a category all his own, Marsalis replied: "When you talk about Louis you are talking about the deepest human feeling and the highest level of musical sophistication in the same man. He knew the low life and was regal at the same time." Armstrong's own words on playing jazz were, "What you hear from a man's horn is what he is. Each man has his own music bubbling up inside him, and different ones let it out in different ways."

He was Satchmo, Pops – the image of him with hankie in hand and a big grin; the laughing face as he strutted next to Bing Crosby in a film or huskily cheering the Barbara Streisand of "Hello, Dolly." However, to many of both the public and his fellow musicians, he seemed too much of a vintage Uncle Tom – a Black Sambo-like figure; a throwback. This was especially noted by his detractors of the "showbiz" side of him which was most prominently displayed in his movie roles. What critics such as Dizzy Gillespie, who had his own form of "showbiz shtick," later came to recognize was that Armstrong's grinning in the face of racism was his absolute refusal to let anything steal the joy from his life...the joy of playing his music and performing for audiences.



Anyone who has read anything about jazz knows the Armstrong story: born (he claimed) on the 4th of July 1900 in a New Orleans slum, no father on the scene, a teenage delinquent who learned to play the cornet while in the home for Colored Waifs. Mentored by King Oliver, joining his band in Chicago in 1922, switching to trumpet and recording his first scat singing on "Heebie Jeebies" in 1925. By 1929 he was appearing on Broadway in the hit "Hot Chocolate," which featured him singing "Ain't Misbehavin'" and led him to concentrate on appearing as a pop entertainer at the expense of his career as purely a jazz musician. He was drawn into the "showbiz" side through his hunger for applause, rooted in the extreme insecurity of his early years.

He put on big shows with his big bands through the mid-1940s when that era collapsed, then organized his "All Stars" with Earl Hines, Jack Teagarden, Sid Catlett and Barney Bigard. By the '50s he was one of the best known entertainers in the world, having appeared in almost 50 films from 1935 onward, and had the U.S. State Dept. sponsoring him on many international tours where he was known as America's Ambassador of Jazz. His playing transformed the sound of any orchestra or group he played with. He changed the choppy syncopation of the '20s to the pulsing big band swing of the '30s. His fellow musicians deemed him the heir to all that came before, and the father of all that was to come. To quote Wynton Marsalis again: "He was chosen to bring the feeling and the message and the identity of jazz to the world. He invented a new style of playing, fusing the sound of blues with the American popular song."

Armstrong was proud of his race but unblinking about the reality of race relations in America. He called himself black and proud long before the Stokely Carmichaels came to be, back in the '30s when it was very unpopular to refer to Negroes as black. He was a major financial supporter of Dr. Martin Luther King, but preferred to work behind the scenes, which really made it even more effective when he did speak out at the time of the uproar over desegregating the Little Rock, Arkansas schools in 1957. Nine black students were trying to enter a major Southern high school for the first time, and two weeks after they were first barred from the school Armstrong gave an interview

before a concert to a young reporter in North Dakota. He charged President Eisenhower, who had not really faced down Gov. Faubus, as "two faced" and "having no guts," and bitterly recounted to the reporter some of his experiences touring in the Jim Crow south. He had recently been asked by the State Department to do a goodwill tour to the Soviet Union, and said "If the people over there ask me what's wrong with my country, what good can I say?"

When the reporter filed his story with the Associated Press the next morning, he was asked to prove he didn't make it up, so he went back to the hotel where Armstrong was staying and showed him what he had written. Armstrong told him, "Don't take nothing out of that story, I mean what I said," and then wrote "Solid" on the bottom of the reporter's yellow pad and signed his name. The article ran nationwide and caused a firestorm of commentary. Sammy Davis Jr. criticized him for not speaking out earlier, but Jackie Robinson, Lena Horne and others quickly backed him up. Jet magazine, which had once called him an Uncle Tom for his music convincing people that the Negro's lot in America was a happy one, now saluted him. Some promoters cancelled shows that he was scheduled to perform. The Ford Motor Company threatened to pull out of a Bing Crosby special on which he was to appear. Armstrong himself pulled out of the Soviet Union tour. And the next day, President Eisenhower sent 1,200 troops into Little Rock and the following day, soldiers escorted the nine students into Central High School. Armstrong wired the President "God Bless You."

In summary, the number of Americans' who listen to and love jazz music is minute compared to what it once was, and there are too few places now where young musicians get a chance to play jazz. In addition, there are the divisions into antagonistic camps: Dixie, main stream, bebop, avant garde. Despite the barriers, the journey that began at the beginning of the 20th century with the Louis Armstrongs continues into the 21st with jazz remaining gloriously inclusive...the proud mongrel of America. It is music filled with the marvelous echoes of the past yet brand new every night. Jazz is the sound of hope; the hope of what America will be when it fulfills its promise of equality for all.

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# Jazznotes

June 2014

Jazz Notes is the newsletter for members of the West Michigan Jazz Society.

If you would like your jazz event included in our media publications please send your schedules to [jlbasham@i2k.com](mailto:jlbasham@i2k.com) by the 15th of the month.

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