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Jazznotes

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September-October 2021



WMJS 2020-21 **MOY** Musician Of the Year **Dr. Paul Brewer**

**Monday
December 6, 2021**

Happy hour 6-7, Dinner at 7 dancing until 9:30pm

Watermark Country Club

5500 Cascade Road SE • Grand Rapids, MI 49546

We will also be having a silent auction! If you can donate something for the silent auction, please let us know at wmichjazz@gmail.com.



Speaking of Jazz

Check out our website, Facebook page, and the West Michigan Jazz Society YouTube Channel! We will be posting a line up soon! You can view some of the previous interviews with fantastic artists and panels such as Authenticity and Ethics in Jazz Education, Chris Jasper of the Isley Brothers, Chuck McPherson, Women in Jazz Roundtable, Stacy Dillard, Elgin Vines, Rufus Ferguson, Akua Dixon, Gail Boyd, Dr. Rick Holland, Young Lions of GR, Bob Nixon & GRJO and many others! They have shared their experience, knowledge, and talent with us on these exciting talks led by Jordan VanHemert. If you have any ideas of Speaking of Jazz topics or individuals you would like to see, let us know!

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JAZZ GUMBOS ARE BACK!

Concerts will again be held at the Casino Club, 3260 Salerno Drive NE, just off the Plainfield exit on I 96. No need for reservations, parking is free, and there is open seating. The Jennifer Idema Family (Coney Girl) will again be preparing the food choices, gumbo or soup served with salad and bread, or hot dogs and chips. The meal will be cafeteria style and included in the cost of your ticket. The Casino Club bartenders will offer concert attendees the Casino Club's membership drink prices!

Cost is \$15.00 for WMJS members, \$20.00 for non members and \$10.00 for students with ID. (If you choose not to get a food ticket, the price will be \$5.00 less). Doors open at 6, concert times will be 6:30-8:30 p.m.



September 20

Lauren Elliot Quartet

Currently studying at Western Michigan University, Lauren Elliott is a baritone saxophonist/composer emerging from the West Michigan area. Joining her to comprise this collaborative quartet are fellow WMU peers. **Aris Chalin** (piano), Ann Arbor, MI, brings a vast variety of influences into his own playing to enhance every note. Drummer, **Joe Miller**, is an all-star from Kalamazoo, MI, constantly displaying his natural intuition on the instrument at a young age. **Owen Cramer**, Kalamazoo, is already an astounding musician entering his sophomore year. The quartet will be performing an array of Lauren's original music, traditional tunes with personal arrangements, and to honor him on his birthday, the music of the legendary John Coltrane.

October 18

Ivan Akansiima

Ivan Akansiima is a multi-instrumentalist, a Christian by faith, worship leader, Jazz musician, composer, arranger, producer, instructor, and researcher from Uganda East Africa. He holds a BA in music from Hope College and a Masters in jazz studies from Western Michigan University. His music is rooted in Ugandan folk music traditions, Jazz, Gospel, classical, Caribbean, Afro fusion music etc. He has performed professionally for over 15 years in 40 countries, including a national tour across the USA and Canada. Ivan will be featuring the music of Art Blakey tonight with a quartet.



November 15

Kathy Lamar Quartet

Vocalist Kathy Lamar says her shows are like a blind date — because you never know what you're going to get. She sings a diverse blend of jazz, R&B, soul, and pop hits pulled from many decades. One minute, you might hear a Sting or Bob Marley tune, and the next, an Ella Fitzgerald or Billy Holiday song. Her powerful voice and infectious laugh keeps audiences coming back for more.

Letter from the President

Greetings!

It has been such a great summer this year being able to see everyone at the Jazz at Millennium Park on Monday evenings this summer! After missing a year of these events last year, I think we all have gained a true appreciation of being able to see people in person and listen to live music again. We had no idea how we would do this summer, but people have shown up and been generous in supporting our 10 weeks of concerts this year. In one concert we had over 700 people in attendance.

It was such a joy to see people enjoying their time at the park and to see children and adults dancing, clapping and singing along with the band at times. Seeing the smiles on peoples faces and hearing all of the positive comments make all of the work involved worth it.

I would like to take a moment to thank our attendees who showed up and gave generously to our bucket brigade, the wonderful bands, our sound crew who does an amazing job, our food truck vendors (Coney Girl and Kool Breeze) for serving us great food every week, our awesome sponsors who gave their support financially to hold these events, the Kent County Parks for the beautiful space, and to the board members and volunteers who worked hard every week to make this event happen and who took pictures to share with us.

Even though summer is wrapping up, we have some exciting events coming up. Jazz Gumbos are back at the Casino Club, Speaking of Jazz will be starting up again, jazz jam sessions will be happening at GRCCT for ArtPrize, and we will be holding the Musician of the Year celebration in December. Please continue to support us by becoming a member, donating, bringing friends, volunteering, and helping us to expand our social media following by sharing our events commenting, liking our website, etc. We truly appreciate all of you!

-Michelle Needham



IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 MOY Save the Date
- 1 Speaking of Jazz
- 2 Jazz Gumbo Sept.
- 3 Letter from the President
- 4 Recollections of WMJS
- 5 Volunteer Corner
- 6-7 Jazz Music Schedules
- 7 Art Prize GRCCT

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Recollections of the West Michigan Jazz Society

By John Miller, edited/additions by Mary Rademacher

"Although I had enjoyed listening to local musicians playing at the many venues around Grand Rapids, I was not aware of the West Michigan Jazz Society until a friend told me about it. So I joined and learned about all of their contributions to the local jazz scene. A few years later [around 2002], that same friend asked if I would be interested in joining the organization's board of directors. Why not? And then I met Betty Forrest," John recalled.

In John's (and most) opinion, "Betty was an irascible, opinionated woman who literally ran the jazz society single handedly. It took some doing, but eventually I came to like and admire all she did. I doubt that the organization would still exist if it weren't for Betty. And I still remember her as a dear friend."

"In those days, we had a board of five or six members, which was all we needed since Betty was treasurer, secretary, and chief decision maker. We had our shows at John Ball Park in the summer, and at the Kopper Top throughout the rest of the year. Betty hired the musicians with a minimum of suggestions from the board" chuckled Miller.

Working bank balances were becoming depleted. There had been a Jimmy Forrest* Scholarship Fund, but the funds ran out. *(a saxophonist who was Betty's husband and composed the jazz standard, Night Train). Miller contributed a generous amount to reboot the scholarship fund, enough to have it named after him, but deferred and suggested keeping the original name. Jack Morrison (RIP) also made a sizable amount. Together, their contributions have kept the fund growing and help high school and college students cover the high costs of an education. In fact, each time a person adds to the buckets at WMJS events, the money goes directly to the scholarship fund.

John's wife, Barbara Keller, became involved along his side -at first as Secretary - then became a member of the Board for many years. They both have been a major influence and presence on the



jazz scene in Grand Rapids, whether supporting as fans, or volunteering at an event. Around this time, Monday night jazz was newer at John Ball Zoo. Along with other board members, John and Barb were directly involved in negotiating the Jazz at the Zoo series location. As the successful community event grew, the Zoo had to set some rules - that's when the WMJS had to start organizing clean up, parking and traffic volunteers.

In light of their recent "retirement" from The Board of Directors, John and Barb were honored for their contributions and service at a surprise (to them) dinner event, organized by the Board at Watermark Grille in June. Warm wishes, thanks and stories were exchanged throughout the evening.

John concluded, "In the two decade period that I have been involved, it has been my privilege and honor to have been a part of the West Michigan Jazz Society. For the many friends I have made, both musicians and devotees, I am grateful. And above all - let's keep live jazz alive!!!"

In this writer's opinion, John was the voice of reason and wisdom for many years and we will miss his sage advice and company. We shared many a glass of wine after board meetings and became dear friends with both John and Barb. You can still say hello to them at any jazz event, though!

Thank you, John and Barb, for your many years of support, involvement and friendship with The West Michigan Jazz Society!

BRUCE ROBEY, “Official Photographer” for WMJS

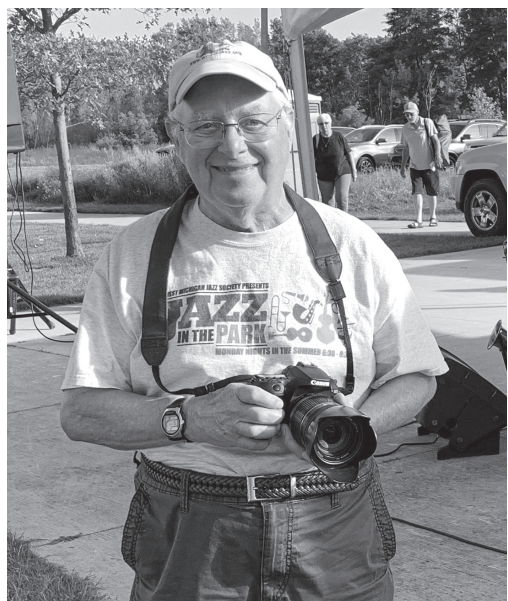
We know you’ve noticed the multitude of stellar photos for WMJS on facebook, our website and in our newsletter. Mr. Bruce Robey has been kind enough to DONATE his time on site, editing and sharing his photos of musicians and events for many years now. You can’t miss Bruce snapping away near the stage and around; vying for that perfect moment...again and again. Let’s learn about this generous man ! I asked Bruce to send me a bit about him...



Why I take pictures of jazz musicians:

Music is in my DNA! My maternal grandfather sang solos in Grandville, and my mother Alyce Robey sang solos at Fountain Street Church in the 40’s and 50’s. She could also play “Rhapsody in Blue” on the piano. My parents played a lot of records while I was growing up. Big bands like Benny Goodman, Stan Kenton, Glen Miller, Harry James, Duke Ellington, etc. They had favorite artists, too – Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Peggy Lee, Errol Garner, Perry Como, George Shearing, Nat King Cole and many others. My early environment had a lot to do with why I love Jazz.

I took piano lessons starting in grade school and into high school. I played trumpet in the grade school band and French horn in the Ottawa Hills High School orchestra. I taught myself how to strum the guitar in college so I could sing folk songs like Peter, Paul, and Mary or the Kingston Trio. My favorite instrument is my voice. I have been singing in church choirs since I was a little boy, and I, too, have sung solos at Park Church. Once a year for the past 10 years, I have sung jazz standards with local jazz artists such as Mark Kahny, Robin Connell, Steve Anzivino, Mike Lutley, Elgin Vines, and Charlie Hoats at Park church for their Tuesday - Music at Mid-day.



So why do I like to take pictures of jazz musicians? First, I LOVE the music. Second, I like to capture their faces doing something they love. Most of the time, the expressions on their faces show deep emotion and one can see that they are really enjoying what they do.

I don’t consider myself a professional photographer. I took a couple of courses in college and most recently again. As I started taking more photos, I invested in some higher quality lenses for my trusty Nikon camera and continue to learn as I go.

- Bruce Robey

We are grateful at WMJS for your love of jazz music and photography. Thank you for your generosity, Bruce.

If you see him around (and it’s pretty easy to) give a wave, a “thank you” or acknowledgement to Bruce!

- Mary Rademacher

**Festival of the Arts along with
Grand JazzFest has been cancelled
for September 2021**

September Jazz Around West Michigan

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 1

- The New Standard Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Laura Bennett Trio at GR Noir, 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations

THURSDAY, SEPT 2

- The New Standard at Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- Jazz at the Book Nook in Montague, 7-9pm, \$5 cover

FRIDAY, SEPT 3

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- The New Standards at American Dunes Golf, Grand Haven, 6-9pm open to public

SATURDAY, SEPT 4

- John Shea Trio at Noto's Old World Italian, 6:30-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations

SUNDAY, SEPT 5

- Fred Knapp Trio at the Old Goat, Eastern Ave, 11am-2pm

MONDAY, SEPT 6 LABOR DAY

TUESDAY, SEPT 7

- Jazz at Moriarty's, Lansing, 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 8

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- Eric Wendlandt Trio, at Gun Lake Casino, featuring Kathy Lamar, 5:30-8:30pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 9

- The New Standard at Smash Wine Bar, in the Frauenthal, Muskegon, 7-9pm
- Steve Talaga Trio at the Book Nook in Montague, 7-9pm, \$5 cover
- Owen James, solo guitar at Petoskey Farms Vineyard and Winery, Petoskey, 6-8pm

FRIDAY, SEPT 10

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- The New Standard at Grand Dunes Golf, Grand Haven open to public 6-9pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 11

- John Shea Trio at Noto's, 6:30-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations

SUNDAY, SEPT 12

- Fred Knapp Trio at the Old Goat, Eastern Ave, 11am-2pm
- Mary Rademacher with Tom and Cherie Hagen, Grand Lady Riverboat, 3pm www.grandlady.info for reservations
- Owen James, solo guitar at Beards Brewery, Petoskey 6-9pm

MONDAY, SEPT 13

- John Shea Trio at Republic, 7-10pm

TUESDAY, SEPT 14

- Truth in Jazz Orchestra at Watermark, Washington and Division,
- Muskegon, 7-9:30pm, \$5 cover
- Jazz at Moriarty's, Lansing, 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 15

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Tom Hagen Trio featuring Rick Reuther, Notos lounge, 6-9pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- Eric Wendlandt Trio, at Gun Lake Casino, featuring Kathy Lamar, 5:30-8:30pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 16

- Jazz at Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- Steve Talaga with Stephen Talaga at the Book Nook in Montague, 7-9pm, \$5 cover
- The New Standard at Smash Wine Bar, in the Frauenthal, Muskegon, 7-9pm

FRIDAY, SEPT 17

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- The New Standard at American Dunes Golf, Grand Haven, open to public, 6-9pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 18

- John Shea Trio at Noto's Old World Italian, 6:30-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations

SUNDAY, SEPT 19

- Art Prize Jazz Jam at GR Community Transformation Ctr, Franklin and Madison, 2-5pm

MONDAY, SEPT 20

- John Shea Trio at Republic, 7-10pm

TUESDAY, SEPT 21

- Jazz at Moriarty's, Lansing, 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 22

- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- The New Standard Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Eric Wendlandt Trio, at Gun Lake Casino, featuring Kathy Lamar, 5:30-8:30pm
- Tom Hagen Trio featuring Rick Reuther, Notos lounge, 6-9pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 23

- The New Standard at Smash Wine Bar, in the Frauenthal, Muskegon, 7-9pm
- JMM Jazz at Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- Jazz at the Book Nook in Montague, 7-9pm, \$5 cover
- Owen James, solo guitar at Petoskey Farms Vineyard and Winery, Petoskey, 6-8pm

FRIDAY, SEPT 24

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- Steve Talaga with Stephen Talaga at Saugatuck Brewing Company
- The New Standard at American Dunes Golf Resort, Grand Haven, Open to public 6-9pm

SATURDAY, SEPT 25

- John Shea Trio at Noto's, 6:30-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- Steve Talaga with Stephen Talaga at American Dunes Golf Club, Grand Haven, 6-9pm

SUNDAY, SEPT 26

- Fred Knapp Trio at the Old Goat, Eastern Ave, 11am-2pm
- Art Prize Jazz Jam at GR Community Transformation Ctr.
- Franklin and Madison, 2-5pm

MONDAY, SEPT 27

- John Shea Trio at Republic, 7-10pm

TUESDAY, SEPT 28

- Jazz at Moriarty's, Lansing, 7-9pm

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 29

- John Shea Trio Live Streaming on Facebook, 7-9:30pm
- Jazz at GR Noir 7:30pm and 8:45pm, 616-791-1191 for reservations
- Eric Wendlandt Trio, at Gun Lake Casino, featuring Kathy Lamar, 5:30-8:30pm
- Tom Hagen Trio featuring Rick Reuther at Notos in the lounge, 6-9pm

THURSDAY, SEPT 30

- Jazz at Sandy Point Beach House, West Olive, 6-9pm
- Jazz at the Book Nook in Montague, 7-9pm, \$5 cover
- The New Standard at Smash Wine Bar, in the Frauenthal, Muskegon, 7-9pm

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AND WELCOME!

Look for all info in
upcoming newsletter!
or email us now at
wmichjazz@gmail.com
Writers for newsletter, table
workers and more!

ArtPrize 2021

September 16-October 3, 2021

The jam sessions (2-5pm)

will feature the following:

September 19 - Lisa Sung trio

September 26 - Nathan Borton Trio

October 3 - Robin Connell Trio



WMJS is excited to be involved in ArtPrize with GRCCT hosting jazz jams. More info to come in the next newsletter.

ArtPrize® is an open, independently organized international art competition which takes place in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It celebrates artists working in all mediums from anywhere in the world, and is open to any creative with an artwork to enter and a venue willing to host it.

For 18 days, art is exhibited throughout the city in public parks and museums, in galleries and vacant storefronts, in bars and on bridges. ArtPrize awards \$450,000 directly to artists, through grants to support their ambitious work and through prizes which the public decides through the ArtPrize website.

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Jazznotes

Newsletter for members of the West Michigan Jazz Society

September 2021

If you would like your jazz event included
in our media publications please send your
schedules to jlbasham@i2k.com
by the **10th** of the month.

West Michigan Jazz Society Board Members

Board meetings are now held virtually on Zoom. 4th Saturday of each month, 9:30 am

If anyone wants to view them they can ask for the link

WMJS main number . . . 616-490-9506

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Michelle Needham – President

Shannan Dennison – Vice President

Jim Reed – Treasurer

Jake Vanderheyden – Secretary

Jan Basham

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Peni Reed

Scott Freeman

Dan Ohlman

Jordan VanHemert

Tim Froncek

Mary Rademacher

REMINDER: ALL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS WERE DUE JANUARY 1, 2021. YOUR PROMPT ATTENTION WOULD HELP US GREATLY AS WE STRUGGLE THROUGH THIS YEAR OF SHUTDOWNS. THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

This Issue of Jazz Notes
was produced by:

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