

NEWS OF PAST STUDENT COMPETITION WINNERS

by Carolyn Tokson



Sam Butler; past Jazz Pensacola Student Jazz Competition winner

Sam Butler, trumpeter, won first prize in the high school instrumentalist division of the 2017 Jazz Pensacola Student Competition. Since then he earned first chair in the Alabama all state concert band as well as lead trumpet in the state jazz band. He was selected twice for the Brevard Jazz Institute and for the Music for All's Jazz Band of America. In his senior year at Fairhope High School, he graduated with honors while serving as the band president. He received the Premier Young Artist and Music Faculty scholarship awards from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN. Sam and accepted into Indiana University's Hutton Honors College with a full scholarship. He received the IU Young Artist award and was selected for the school's top big band, the Brent Wallarab Ensemble. This March he will compete as a top-10 semi-finalist in the National Trumpet Competition's Jazz Division which consists of both undergraduate and graduate competitors. Sam is the grandson of local musicians and Jazz Pensacola members, Rosie and Ed Butler of Pensacola. They sometimes grace us with their presence and performance at our Jazz Jams at the Vineyard.

Three female vocalists who have been in several competitions are very active in Pensacola's music community. Isabelle Peterson first competed in 2012 when she was home schooled. Since then she has been in four subsequent competitions. She will graduate from the Voice Performance Program at University of West Florida this spring. Isabelle is music director at Nativity of our Lord

Catholic Church in town and she recently performed in the Pensacola Opera's chorus. Elisha Miller, another student in Voice Performance at UWF is the Music Director of St. Mark United Methodist Church. A young entrepreneur, she is running her own business teaching music to 25 students. Asia Leech, who won \$400 each year in our competition of 2017 and 2018 used the money to purchase equipment which she uses in making music for her installation and video art. She is involved in a DJ collective with some friends who are learning from each other and experimenting with their musical styles. Recently the Conner brothers, Andrew and Aundre, both seniors at Booker T. Washington High School were honored as Young Leaders of Tomorrow by the local chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Both were winners in last year's student competition. Andrew plays trumpet and Aundre plays the upright bass. Investing in the jazz education of these students is a source of pride to Jazz Pensacola. The Student Competition is sponsored by Jazz Education Team Supporters (JETS) and a grant from the Studer Foundation. This year's Student Competition will take place at Phineas Phogg's at Seville Quarter at 6:30 PM Monday March 18. The event is free and open to the public.



BYRNES JAZZ SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED AT UWF

by Norman Vickers

Jazz Pensacola member Bob Byrnes has endowed the Robert E. and Margaret V. Byrnes music scholarship at UWF. Dr. Sheila Dunn, chair of the UWF Music Department said, "This is currently our only scholarship for music majors with an interest in jazz. The funds will be used to recruit and retain music majors who are passionate about performing in the UWF Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Combo and for music majors who are studying related coursework such as Jazz Improvisation, Jazz Fundamentals and Jazz History."

Dr. Dunn related further, "Studying and performing jazz is a critical part of every serious musician's training. This new scholarship endowment will help our department to continue to grow our jazz studies opportunities so that we can graduate well-rounded, disciplined, creative musicians who are prepared for professional performing and teaching careers in the 21st century."

Jazz Pensacola members know of Bob's interest in jazz. He was a Notre Dame room-mate, randomly assigned, with guitarist Gene Bertoncini. Bertoncini has performed for Jazz Pensacola three times, the last two under sponsorship of Byrnes. Congratulations Bob. Keep up the good work! 

WHEN BOBBY HUTCHERSON MET RAILROAD BILL

by Norman Vickers



Sheriff E.W. McMillan viewing the body of Morris Slater a.k.a. Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill was the name assigned to Morris Slater in the late 1800s. He was the Jessie James type black desperado who would rob the trains and sell to those nearby. Legend has it that, if they didn't buy voluntarily, he would force purchases at gunpoint. He had killed a number of persons who worked for the railroad and, in a subsequent shoot-out, had killed Sheriff McMillan of Escambia County, Al. After Slater was killed, enterprising merchants exhibited his body to onlookers for a fee.

Fast forward to the 1970s when entrepreneur Arden Anderson built New World Landing—an auditorium and boutique hotel. He decorated the auditorium with historic photographs of early Pensacola including views of the busy Pensacola harbor with its fishing smacks. There was a photo of the body of Morris Slater, lashed to a railroad tie with a white man in overalls with rifle in arms with his foot on the railroad tie—no doubt a paying tourist having taken his photo.

Most people were unfamiliar with the background of the photo.

In 1990, WUWF Radio was major sponsor of JazzFest. Vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson of Los Angeles was a guest artist at the sponsors' party at New World Landing on a Friday night before the Saturday-Sunday JazzFest. Hutcherson saw the photo and quietly informed the WUWF staff that he declined to play. There was no disruption otherwise as the artists were performing in a relaxed format. The Saturday JazzFest went on as scheduled including an excellent performance by Hutcherson.

However, on the front page of the Pensacola News Journal, there as a story about Hutcherson's having declined to play at the sponsors' party because of the Morris Slater photo. It was obvious that the PNJ writer wasn't aware of the

historical nature of the photo. And, apparently, neither was Arden Anderson because, later, he removed all the historical photos from the New World Landing auditorium.

Interestingly, the grandson of Sheriff McMillan was the coach of the Pensacola semi-professional basketball team that year.

Subsequently the PNJ did write a story with background information on Railroad Bill but the historic photos had already been removed and the public interest had waned.

When Mr. Hutcherson was checking out of his Pensacola hotel, the clerk wished him well and hoped he would return. He was reported to have said, "Yes, I enjoyed my stay, but I doubt they'll invite me back."

Mr. Hutcherson died 8-16-2016. Railroad Bill, Morris Slater, was buried in St. John's Cemetery and in 2012 a grave marker was installed as his gave was previously unmarked.



SPARKS AT GALLERY NIGHT

by Carolyn Tokson

Jazz Pensacola now has a presence at Gallery Night. Sparks members made their first appearance with two tables of posters, vinyl, CDs, tees, Nina Fritz lithographs and note cards on a very cold night in December 2018. They followed up again in January and February of 2019. At the last Sparks meeting, they voted unanimously to continue the sales in front of V. Paul's on Palafox as a standard monthly event with the option to eliminate the December event.

Sparks volunteers take turns staffing the Jazz Pensacola tables and eating dinner or joining other friends at the bar for a drink and a nosh. So far the group has raised \$2901 to go toward Jazz Pensacola activities and JazzFest. Nina Fritz, a local artist who has long supported JazzFest with donations of a portrait impression painting and lithographs to the winners of a raffle, recently donated an original water color of Ella Fitzgerald which Sparks member Jim Crumlish sold to two friends at our February Gallery Night event.

That gracious gesture of generosity earned \$2000 for Jazz Pensacola. In years past, Nina painted a series of jazz greats as well as one of the JazzFest posters. Those paintings have been printed as notecards which are for sale at JazzFest and our Gallery night events. Our next Gallery Night will be March 15 with a theme of "The Luck of the Irish." To join us in this endeavor, contact Jim Crulimsh at jacru@cox.net or Carolyn Tokson at ctokson@hotmail.com. 

JAZZ ROOM NEWS

by Norman Vickers

Have you checked out the additions to the Jazz Room at downtown West Florida Public Library? We have subscriptions to jazz periodicals, Downbeat, Jazz Times, The Syncopated Times and Cadence. So drop by and peruse the

latest issue or see back-issues that you may have missed.

Also, there are a number of new music instruction books, some with play-along recordings. These are from suggestions made by Roger Villines and are appropriate for music students of any age or performance level. As Carolyn Tokson reports, jazz books, CDs and DVDs can be searched and requested on the library website and library patrons may pick up and return at any of the library branches. Escambia County residents may obtain a free library card at any of the library branches. 🎷

WHO OR WHAT IS SPARKS?

by Carolyn Tokson

Sparks is the name given to a group of dedicated volunteers and members of Jazz Pensacola who meet monthly on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30 PM at various restaurants to discuss ways to support our jazz society. Our goal is to support the mission of Jazz Pensacola through active volunteerism, creative discussions, educational pursuits, and social experiences in an effort to have casual members become active, committed members. At present we have about fifteen members who attend each meeting faithfully. We also have other volunteers who show up when we need someone to staff the door at the two monthly events of Jazz Jam or Gumbo. They sell tickets and provide information at the admission desk. They staff our Newcomers Table which is connected to the admission table and give out membership forms, email forms, Jazz Pensacola business cards or rack cards with information about Jazz Pensacola. Another steady group supports Dr. Norman Vickers in his collaboration with the West Florida Public Library at the Spring St. branch's annual book sales where we have a table selling CDs and jazz books. We are also the members who staff the different tents at JazzFest. The same crew plus others set up a table at Gallery Night where we give out Jazz Pensacola information and sell vinyl records, posters, Nina Fritz lithographs and note cards, as well as books and CD's. We are a close knit group who see each other frequently and enjoy jazz and each other's company. Some members are present or former board members. Our newest adventures are our presence at Gallery Night in front of V. Paul's Ristorante and a newsletter which published its first edition in February.

We were once called Sparkplugs. The name symbolized our energizing discussions to come up with ideas to assist in spreading jazz music and jazz education in our community. Last year we shortened our name to Sparks. We welcome anyone to attend our meetings and volunteer to work with us at JazzFest 2019. Contact Carolyn Tokson, Sparks Facilitator@ctokson@hotmail.com if you are interested in joining us. We have a lot of enjoyment as we meet and have dinner after our meetings. Please join us! 🎷

CLARENCE BELL UPDATE

by Norman Vickers

Our blind pianist friend Clarence Bell died a few months ago and a memorial piece was published on Norman's blog on the website. Recently, there were comments to the blog from friends who had known Clarence when he lived in other cities. Paul Bruno tells the story about visiting Clarence at his home one day. Clarence had told Paul about having recorded with Stevie Wonder, another blind pianist, when Clarence was living on the West Coast. Paul entered Clarence's house while Clarence was on the phone. Then Clarence passed the phone to Paul and said, "Paul I want you to talk with Stevie Wonder!"

So, be sure to check out the website for new additions. Norman reviews jazz books, CDs and DVDs there. Fred Domulot and Roger Villines have their own blogs there, as well. 🎷

THE DEFINITION OF INSANITY: A CD REVIEW

by Norman Vickers

The Definition of Insanity by Tony Monaco; Hammond B3, piano, accordion, and voice

Chicken Coop Records; release date January 18, 2019

Monaco, a Hammond B3 artist, had done it again. With his usual small-group format which includes guitarist Derek Decenzo, and drummer Tony McClung, he also uses his wife Asake Monaco on piano on a single number, Never Let Me Go.

Monaco is a personal favorite and he earned more converts when he was a featured soloist with his trio at a Pensacola JazzFest in the early 2000s.

The selection of eleven tunes is eclectic. "Cars, Trucks and Buses," by keyboardist Page McConnell is the opener on the CD. Jimmy Smith's "Root Down" is executed more or less faithfully to the Smith version except that Smith used a bass player whereas Monaco plays the bass part with left hand. "Never Let Me Go" is a lovely ballad by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans and features Monaco also on vocals and his wife Asake on piano.

Monaco's only original tune, "Awar Athar" has a Middle Eastern flavor and uses the Turkish scale which he learned from one of his Turkish students. He sings in Italian and also plays accordion on "Non Ti Scordare Di Me" a traditional Neapolitan song. Monaco's rendition of Floyd Cramer's big hit, "Last Date" is also memorable. His finale is "A Song for You," Leon Russell's composition which has been frequently recorded by many artists, is rendered as a vocal as well as keyboard piece.

This CD was a joy to hear and to review. It will be placed in the Jazz Room of the West Florida Public Library for patrons to check out and enjoy as well. 🎷

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 4, 2019** **Jazz Jam**
House Band & Guests
The Vineyard on 12th Avenue
6:30-9:00
- March 13, 2019** **Sparks Meeting**
V. Paul's
5:30-6:30, then dinner
- March 18, 2019** **Jazz Gumbo**
JETS Student Jazz Competition
Phineas Phogg's
6:30-9:00
- April 6th and 7th** **36th Annual JazzFest**
Seville Square
10:00am - 7:00pm
- April 15, 2019** **Jazz Gumbo**
Collegiate All Star Band
Phineas Phogg's
6:30-9:00

JAZZFEST 2019 SCHEDULE

Please remember to bring a chair.

SATURDAY APRIL 6, 2019

- 10:00am Ransom Middle School
10:30am Pace High School
11:00am Tate High School
11:30am Escambia High School
12:00pm Northwest Florida State College
12:45pm Color Guard
1:00pm Jones and Company
2:00pm Soul Station
3:00pm Bodhi Trio
4:00pm Cartoon
5:00pm Bob Shepherd with the Guffman Trio
6:00pm Michael J. Thomas

SUNDAY APRIL 7, 2019

- 10:00am Ferry Pass Middle School
10:30am Hobbs Middle School
11:00am Collegiate All Star Combo
11:30am Washington High School
12:00pm University of West Florida
12:45pm Color Guard
1:00pm Nobius
2:00pm Bob Shepherd with PSC
3:00pm Cynthia Domulot and The Dharma Beats
4:00pm Village Brass
5:00pm Curt Bol Band
6:00pm Rebecca Berry & George Petropolous

BE A JAZZFEST VIP DONOR

by Jazz Pensacola

The 36th Annual Pensacola JazzFest is just around the corner, planned for April 6-7 at Seville Square in historic downtown Pensacola.

Past JazzFest attendees are familiar with the big, white tent strategically placed near the stage -- full of jazz fans sitting in the shade enjoying drinks and light fare. This special tent is for VIP donors and corporate sponsors. Anyone can become a VIP donor for only \$100 (or more), and bring a guest to the VIP tent. The donor's name also will be listed in the program as a VIP, acknowledging their special contribution toward making Pensacola JazzFest a reality.

Jazz Pensacola is asking all music lovers to consider joining other VIP donors by giving a special contribution and enjoying the best seat in the house. You can send a check for \$100 or more payable to Jazz Pensacola (for JazzFest VIP donation), donate online at jazzpensacola.com, or by calling the office at (850) 433-8382.

"The fact is, Jazz Pensacola needs to keep maximizing the fundraising of corporate and personal donations to ensure the future of Pensacola JazzFest," says Fred Domulot, Jazz Pensacola president. "For the past 35 years, the Pensacola music and business communities have been very supportive and generous."

Pensacola JazzFest celebrates America's unique musical art form with a stunning lineup of top talent, from local jazz standouts to world-renowned acts. This year's stellar musicians include worldwide multi-wood performer/recording artist Bob Sheppard, and regional stars Jones and Company, Curt Bol Band, Nobius and Village Brass. There also will be local vendors, quality arts and crafts from regional artisans, and all sorts of fun, jazz-related merchandise.

Jazz Pensacola is a non-profit organization of business and professional people, musicians, teachers, students and listeners working together for the purpose of advancing jazz music and education in Pensacola and the surrounding area.

For details, call the Jazz Pensacola office, 850-433-8382, or visit jazzpensacola.com. 

MIKE SUCHCICKI IS AN INWEEKLY WINNER

by Inweekly

Jazz Pensacola's Board of Directors selected art created by the cartoonist and graphic designer for the 2019 JazzFest poster and marketing materials. Pensacola's Bridge is the central image in Suchcicki's design. The scene also depicts a sports car speeding toward the viewer, driven by Jazz Pensacola president Fred Domulot. The Pensacola JazzFest is April 6-7 in Seville Square. 