

## President's Message

**W**hile I suspect that my name will continue to occur from time to time in this publication, this will be my last "President's Message." I write that sentence with a certain sense of regret.

I write with regret for a couple of reasons. One, as president of the state unit of IAJE, I have had some terrific opportunities. I have had the chance

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**Don't forget to fill out your  
Election Ballot on page 6**

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to get to know better the other outstanding officers of our state unit. I have had the pleasure of seeing how they care about jazz education in this state. I've seen the terrific ideas that they have, how they apply them to their own situations, and how they have thought about using some of these ideas for the benefit of all of our membership. I will continue to be able to work with these fine folks, but in a different way than I have during the past two years. I have had a chance, too, to meet many state members of IAJE who I would very possibly never have gotten to know had I not been president. While again, I hope to continue to meet jazz educators from all over the state, it may not be so easy once I leave the presidency. I also have some regrets about not getting more done for the state unit during my presidency. While I have reported to you on a number of occasions about the good shape that our state unit is in, certainly there is much more that we can do. I regret that we did not do

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• **President, continued on page 2**

## Convention (Part 3)

**A**s has been reported in the last two newsletters, the WSMA, flush with space in the new convention center in Madison, has offered the state units of various music organizations (such as IAJE, the Percussive Arts Society, CDNA, etc.) the option of having "add-ons" to the regular state convention next October. This would amount to a sort of mini-convention for each of the participating groups, on top of the normal offerings of the state music convention.

So far, the following jazz clinics are being offered in the "regular" part of the convention (listed are clinicians and general subject area only, look for convention information for the exact titles):

- **Darmon Meader**, musical director of New York Voices - Vocal Improvising - "Scatting"
- **Shelly Berg**, outstanding West Coast pianist - Jazz Piano Voicing for Young Students
- **Fred Sturm** (who is director of this year's state honors jazz band) - Teaching Jazz for the Classically Trained Musician
- **Steve Wiest** - What To Do With Your Trombone Players
- **Kathy Tuinstra** - Starting a Vocal Jazz Group

Plans for the IAJE mini-convention are not yet solidified, but the following sessions have been suggested and are being pursued:

- **Shelly Berg** - Beginning Improvisation, a Method
- **Ron Keezer** - Beginning Drum Set
- **New Music Reading Session** - Big Band
- **New Music Reading Session** - Vocal Jazz

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## Jazz Camps to be Held This Summer

The invitation went out in our last newsletter for any parties running summer jazz camps to send information to be published in this issue of the newsletter. Unfortunately, we did not get much of a response to that invitation. All of you should have received a letter from Fred Sturm about the Jazz Fantasy Camp to be held in Door County later this summer. There is also an ad in this issue for that camp (see page 2). We did receive information on the Birch Creek camps from Michael Brickley.

### **Birch Creek Music Performance Center, Egg Harbor, WI.**

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## • President, continued from page 1

more under my leadership. Not that things didn't get done. Seeing the "state" of state units around the country has made me realize that it is something of an accomplishment just keeping a state unit going. While I regret that we haven't had a greater variety of material in the last few newsletters, nonetheless, those newsletters have continued to come out, just about on time. The sponsorship that we have had in the newsletters from companies advertising their products and services is new during the past two years, and has proved to be a real boon to IAJE in managing costs of the newsletter. Thanks to Roberta Porfilio-Sawall for her valuable help with the ads. Hopefully these advertisers feel that their dollars have been well spent. Not only has the newsletter come out, but it is also now available through the state unit's web

page. Vice-President Tom Brown has been the driving force behind the web page and deserves our gratitude. Other ideas that have mostly been in the planning stages for a while will be coming to fruition soon. Next October will see an expanded role for jazz and the IAJE at our state convention (see article on page one of this issue). We also hope to have at least one, if not two IAJE sponsored clinics next fall (see yet another article). President-elect Karen Johnson has been instrumental in both of these efforts, and I am sure that she will see them through to great success.

But to be perfectly frank, I write my opening statement with some sense of relief as well. As officers of any service type of organization know, one puts in a lot of work in such a position without expecting any "glory." The lack of glory doesn't bother me at all,

but a little less work will be welcome. As all of you do, I have plenty of work in my "day gig" to keep me busy. In fact, I will be adding some new duties at Ripon College next year, and will be happy to have the state IAJE in someone else's capable hands. Also, I can now go to next January's IAJE convention (in New Orleans) without having to worry about going to the state presidents' meeting or having to preside at any events.

The next two years should be great for IAJE. Karen is all ready to go with her presidency. We have a slate full of outstanding candidates for office, that will certainly serve us all well. Thanks for giving me the opportunities that I have had for the past two years. Keep in touch.

**Kurt Dietrich**  
*Ripon College*

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# A New Approach to Jazz Appreciation

**Bob Snyder**

I have been a jazz fan for over 55 years. I have studied the music as much as a non-musician can, which means I've focused on the music's history. I have been presenting courses on Jazz History and Appreciation for credit and non-credit for over forty years. This course was put together after some experiences described in the material and from reading *Thinking in Jazz* by Paul C. Berliner and *The Tao of Music: Sound Psychology* by John M. Ortiz. I would really appreciate feedback on this approach. (write to the author at 506 Amherst Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54901)

**Expressing the Inexpressible**

On a comfortable fall afternoon, I walked into Matt Betton's Music Store on Pontz Avenue in Manhattan,

Kansas. It was 1954. I had just arrived in Manhattan a month or two before to teach radio and television at Kansas State University. Someone had told me that with my interest in jazz education I had to meet Matt. How right they were.

While I waited for Matt to finish with a customer I looked around the store. My eyes were drawn to a series of plaques or posters at the top of the walls near the ceiling. Each bore a quote from a famous musician or philosopher about the value of music. One of them read something like, "Music is the art of expressing the inexpressible." As you can see, I remembered that quote.

For over forty years I have been teaching Jazz History and Appreciation to diverse audiences. I'm always looking for new ways to share my enthusiasm for the music with listen-

ers. Some things happened this summer that started me on this idea.

The presentation begins with me asking the group if they have ever been to Rio [de Janeiro]. (A few had.) I asked them if they remembered anything striking about flying in. One of them remembered the statue of Christ on top of Mount Corcovado. I said, "This is a musical impression of flying into Rio and seeing that statue." I played "Christo Redentor" by Donald Byrd, written by Duke Pearson. After the selection I explained how, to someone who had been to Rio, the music became more than just flying through the air and seeing the statue—you began to feel the awe and wonder the composer

• **Jazz Appreciation,**  
continued on page 4

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**E N S E M B L E S**

Jazz I, II  
Vocal Jazz  
Combo I, II, III

## • Jazz Appreciation, continued from page 3

saw. This is what I meant by “expressing the inexpressible.”

The next step was to bring them along, with words and music, to how I got to this topic. I told them that back in high school, when my interest began, I was crazy about this record, and played “After You’ve Gone” by Gene Krupa’s orchestra featuring Roy Eldridge on trumpet. I asked them why this would appeal to a 14-year-old high school student. (Play the record and see what your answers are.)

Next I told them that I learned very early that jazz musicians could express their emotions through their music. I told them the story of how Charlie Parker went on stage at Carnegie Hall just fuming at his buddy Dizzy Gillespie, because Diz was billed as the star of the concert. Bird took out his emotions; he asserted his pride with his famous 4-bar break in which he plays 63 carefully placed notes. (The 64th is a brief rest before the break takes off.) I played “Night in Tunisia.” It’s available on a couple of CDs.

I shared with the audience an experience I had in the spring of 1998 when I was giving a program on what jazz was and what some of its styles were. Just before I began the second half of my presentation, one of the members of the group announced that one of their founders had just lost her fight with cancer. I talked about the revived interest in swing and what swing was then said that there was no way I could play all the styles I had listed or all the examples, so I would accept requests. The first request was for “modern jazz” (whatever that is). I introduced the example by saying that it was Billy Strayhorn’s last composition. He was in the hospital in New York City, dying of cancer. I played “Blood Count,” performed by Stan Getz. His cries of pain and hope meant there wasn’t a dry eye in the house.

I recalled how, in the summer of 1998, my wife and I were up at our cabin, painting it. One morning after

breakfast I just couldn’t get up from the chair and start painting. I knew I had to get up and get started because my wife was already moving. I put on Tommy Dorsey’s “Well Git It” and the brief depression was blown away by the trumpets and Buddy Rich’s drums.

That was all by introduction. I knew jazz could make a difference in my life. Could I help others let it make a difference in theirs?

The balance of the program is divided into three parts: concrete or tangible things; less concrete concepts like colors; and emotions or feelings.

I asked them if they could see the snow come down when Claude Thornhill played “Snowfall.” I asked them what elements of congestion they could hear in Artie Shaw’s “Traffic Jam.” I asked them why John Harmon chose to call his piano sketch “Wishing Well.” Then I asked them what a dry martini was. It can be defined—one part dry vermouth to several parts of gin or vodka. But what does it *taste* like? Can you describe it? Paul Desmond claimed that he tried to sound like a dry martini. To express this I played Paul Desmond’s “Music for a While.”

The second inexpressible topic was colors. Duke Ellington is perfect for colors. I played Duke’s “Magenta Haze,” featuring Johnny Hodges, and we discussed the color magenta at sunset. We also noticed the composer’s sudden burst of red in the brass, just before the sun set. The composer describes “Transblucency” as “a pale blue light you can just barely see through” or something like that. When you listen to Kay Davis interweave her lines around first, Lawrence Brown’s trombone and then Jimmy Hamilton’s clarinet, you can understand what the composer meant by his title and definition. And his composition.

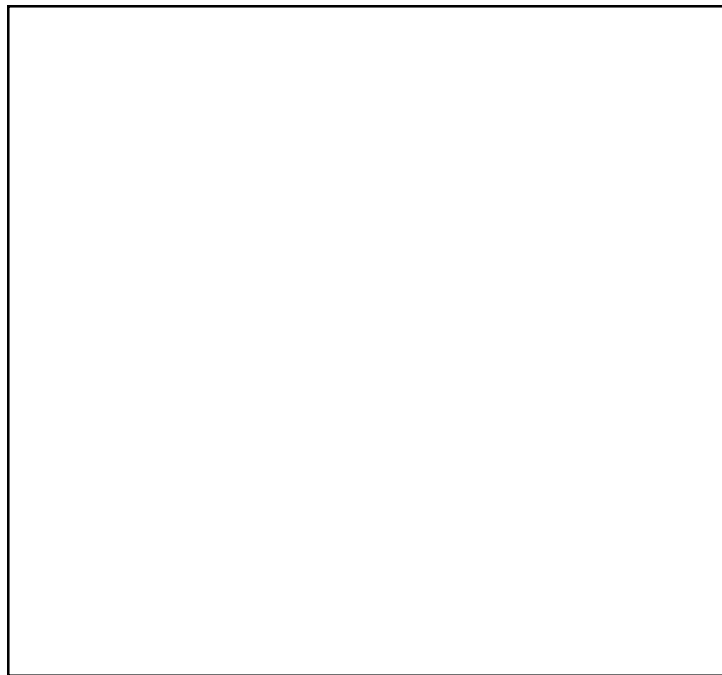
The last topic was the most abstract, feelings. Emotions. I asked the group why I, basically an older listener, should be captivated by “Are You Going With Me?” by Pat Metheny.

I asked them the same question about Stanley Meyer’s composition “Cavatina” played by guitarist John Williams. The first time I heard the recording I immediately replayed it six or seven times until I had to leave for class. (The piece was part of the soundtrack for “The Deer Hunter,” I believe.) I asked them to describe the emotions in Duke’s “I Got It Bad and That Ain’t Good.” I set the scene for John Coltrane’s performance of “Alabama” and asked them to tell me the emotions the artist was feeling. I asked them to tell me about the character of this artist and then played “My Funny Valentine” by Chet Baker. I asked them to imagine PASSION so strong it hurt, and played “Passion Flower” by Johnny Hodges. I talked about the grief of losing my two best friends in less than ten months, two jazz fans, and played them Wynton Marsalis’s interpretation of “Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.”

After some closing discussion, I introduced what I think is one of the finest performances in jazz or contemporary music, for that matter—*Focus*, composed by Eddie Sauter for Stan Getz and strings. Every note by Getz is improvised, based on what he has heard in the score. I played “Her,” which is dedicated to the one you love. The group received the feeling.

The purpose was not to talk about how jazz started in New Orleans and moved up the Mississippi on the riverboats. Nor was it to teach them about “blues form.” It was designed to get a group of people listening to music in a different way. To get them to talk about what they heard in the music. None of them had ever been in any of my previous courses. The presentation took a little over two hours and I had to cut one or two items out. I never challenged their comments. I tried to draw out more comments, and made sure that

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# Election Ballot

Note special election procedures for this election. Four candidates have been nominated by the executive board and have agreed to run for election. All four of these candidates will be on the same ballot. You may vote for two candidates. The candidate who receives the most votes will become President-Elect. The candidate who receives the second most votes will become Vice-President. The other two candidates will become members of the executive board (along with all current officers and past presidents). Karen Johnson, current President-Elect, will become president for the term 1999-2001. Tom Busch has agreed to remain in office as Secretary-Treasurer. However, you may write in for this office.

## For President-Elect and Vice President (vote for two)

\_\_\_\_ Tom Brown, Eau Claire

\_\_\_\_ Roberta Porfilio-Sawall, New London

\_\_\_\_ Steve Sveum, Sun Prairie

\_\_\_\_ Steve Wiest, Whitewater

\_\_\_\_ Write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

## For Secretary-Treasurer

\_\_\_\_ Tom Busch

\_\_\_\_ Write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return your ballot by July 1, 1999, to:  
Kurt Dietrich, c/o Ripon College, P.O. Box 248, Ripon, WI 54971-0248**

# • Jazz Appreciation, continued from page 4

everyone participated in the discussion.

The plan is to expand this into three hour-and-a-half sessions. I intend to add sections on trains, flowers, the rainbow and more colors. I also intend to ask the students to bring in music from their collections that they believe expresses the inexpressible.

I would appreciate your comments, suggestions and questions. I believe all the musical selections are available on CD except "Cavatina," which is only on LP and probably out of print.

I suggest that you try this with a group. Pick your own inexpressible ideas and musical selections you believe express those ideas.

*Bob Snyder was born in Hastings-on-Hudson, NY. He started listening to and collecting records in 1942; saw his first live big band, Harry James, at the Paramount Theatre, New York City, April 1942. He earned a B.A. from Wartburg College, Waverly, IA, 1953, and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, 1954 and 1965. He has been a jazz disc jockey off and on since 1949, continuously since April 1966. He has been a member of IAJE for over 20 years. He is retired Professor of Radio-TV-Film, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, since 1993.*

## Jazz at Lincoln Center in Wisconsin

**F**orgive me for blowing my own school's horn, but I must let all of you know about a special opportunity that is coming up next fall at Ripon College. Through the good graces of a number of people, the Jazz at Lincoln Center small band will be performing at the College Wednesday night, Sept. 22.

The performance will be an all-Ellington program, featuring small group arrangements made famous by various Ellington units. The band will include a fantastic front-line of guest musical director Nicholas Payton, trumpet; Joe Lovano, tenor; Wes Anderson, alto; and Wycliffe Gordon, trombone. The fabulous Dianne Reeves will be singing!

I don't know who the rhythm section will be, but you can be sure that it, too, will be stellar. Any of you who might want tickets to this special event, contact me at the address below. I will see that you get sent a ticket brochure later this summer.

Kurt Dietrich  
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# Notes

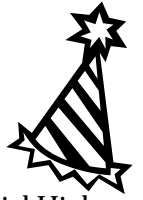


## Congratulations!

For the second year in a row, Wisconsin has a representative in the finals of the Essentially Ellington competition sponsored by Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York. After Sun Prairie's tremendous third place finish in the competition last year, this year finds the Eau Claire Memorial High School jazz ensemble, under the leadership of Bruce Hering in the group of 15 schools from all over the country to be selected for the final competition.



Best wishes to Bruce and all of his young musicians!



## Advertising

Once again in this issue, you can see that advertisers have determined that this newsletter is a good place to publicize their services. Currently the newsletter goes out four times per year to approximately 250 members. Please support the advertisers who help support our effort. Let them know that you saw their ad in this newsletter.

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