



The Official Newsletter of NJ-IAJE

Jersey Jazzer

Jody Moody, Editor

**SOME
IMPORTANT
DATES FOR THIS
UPCOMING
YEAR:**

**NJ-IAJE'S 3RD ANNUAL
ONE DAY
CONFERENCE FOR
JAZZ EDUCATORS**
Friday November 16

**35TH ANNUAL
IAJE CONFERENCE!**

January 9-12, 2008 in Toronto

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Dr. Jeffrey Kunkel

President's Message

Greetings fellow educators, musicians, and jazz lovers!

Welcome to the Spring 2007 online edition of our Jersey Jazzer. This is my final message as President of our unit, and I would like to indulge in a little bit of "blowing our own horn" for this outstanding IAJE unit. I'll start by formally announcing to those who may have not heard that our New Jersey unit was named one of the fifteen "exemplary" units of the association. Although our numerous activities have been informally recognized time and time again at the International Conference, this is the first time that chapter recognition has become formalized. Needless to say, I was very proud to be representing New Jersey during the meetings at the January 2007 New York conference where this was announced.

Next I want to thank all the members of our NJIAJE board who have given selflessly of their time and talents on behalf of jazz education in this state. During my six years as president (no longer a possibility due to stricter control from the national level regarding the two year rotation of officers), I have had absolutely nothing but support from my fellow elected officers and our dedicated appointed officers. In fact, I believe our organization succeeds just because of that – support. I have never worked with a group of individuals who unite better for the common good – in this case, the advancement of jazz education. Though we certainly have our disagreements, everyone does his/her job and supports each other towards the common goal. Special thanks goes to those not formally included as members of our board but who nevertheless contribute outstanding work – our audition chairs, managers, audition and concert hosts, and so on. Please forgive me for not "naming names", but I would undoubtedly forget someone, a risk I am not willing to take! And in any event, our organization is not about individual recognition – it is about helping students to discover and benefit from a unique and creative musical experience – jazz!

I feel I must single out one individual who has been indispensable to me during my nine years here in New Jersey, Mr. Art Martin. I am proud to call Art a colleague and a friend, as I'm sure many of you are. Art has decided to head for warmer weather year-round (all of you who know Art know that the term retirement can never truly be associated with him!) and to spend a little more time honing his golf game. I have enjoyed playing with Art's swing band on many occasions, teaching with Art at Montclair State (where I was able to bring him aboard to teach many of our instrumental techniques courses and where he will be sorely missed), and being involved in NJIAJE activities with Art. [continued on page 2]

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President's Message, continued from page 1

Art is the kind of individual who cannot say "no", who gives of himself to help anyone serious about pursuing musical activities, and who prefers to remain outside of the spotlight. Sounds to me like the kind of guy we can never have enough of. Perhaps no single individual has been more influential in advancing jazz education in our state. We all owe you, Art, and will continue to do our best to make you proud of us.

Finally, I want to wish the best of luck to our next president, Jeff Lesser. I will be proud to continue on the board as "past president" with Jeff at the helm. We will be adding some new blood to our board as of July, and this is as it should be! Without an evolution of involvement and leadership, we would become stagnant, which would never serve the cause of jazz education.

On a personal note, I am indeed enjoying my semester of sabbatical from MSU, and will in fact write a summary of my musical experiences in Brazil for our Fall 07 newsletter (think this way – if nothing else, it will be a great sleep aid one evening!). I think sabbaticals should become a part of all employment – a very civilized form of rejuvenation!

I wish everyone a great summer, and look forward to continuing to work with NJIAJE – albeit in a slightly different capacity – in the fall!

Most Sincerely,
Dr. Jeffrey Kunkel
Montclair State University
President, NJ-IAJE



Dr. Jeff Kunkel conducts Region 1 High School Jazz Band

A message from President-Elect, Mr. Jeffrey Lesser

As high school band directors know, many of us go through cycles with the quality and quantity of our students. We lose dedicated students who have served the band through four solid years, while the band parents and other students panic and think, “How will we ever replace Andrew on lead trumpet, all those trombones, and that great tenor soloist? Of course, we know that our key to success is not necessarily the talent level of the senior class, but the *process* that students go through in order to attain that level of achievement. As long as that process stays in place, so our bands will continue to grow and achieve. Others will step up and fill the shoes of those who have come before them, sometimes even better than their predecessors.

And so it is with the NJ-IAJE board of directors. I often think to myself that I will never be able to fill the shoes of my predecessor, **Jeff Kunkel**. Jeff showed up on the scene just in the nick of time. We were heading into an election without a candidate for President, and Jeff, new to the Jersey scene (but not new to IAJE or jazz) found himself as that person who would fill the shoes of his predecessor. That was six years ago (before the two year rule went into effect), and since that time NJ-IAJE has flourished where we didn’t think it was possible. Of course, he didn’t do it alone, but with fellow board members bringing new ideas to the table, revising old processes and suggesting new programs, we find ourselves at the end of one of those cycles saying, “What could we possibly still add or improve,” and “Who will carry us through the next two years”?

Add to that list the likes of **Dick Graham** and **Art Martin**, who have served this organization from its humble beginnings, and we could have a potential disaster on our hands! There is one saving grace though--that the new board and I have served with these icons of service and have gone through that same process that I spoke of earlier. We have learned and absorbed from their experiences and now stand ready to present our ideas. As new board members both elected and appointed join us for the next two year term, we stand ready to maintain and enhance an organization which is active and vital in New Jersey, and is an integral part of NJMEA jazz procedures (thank you, **Joe Akinskas**).



I look forward to serving you, the members of NJ-IAJE for the next two years as your President. ***I will be calling upon all of you to express your ideas and concerns for an improved organization to serve the needs of jazz educators, students, and music industry members in our state.*** Stick around—you will be pleased!

Jeff Lesser
President-Elect

Jeffrey Lesser is currently the Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts for the Willingboro Public School District. As Director of Bands at John F. Kennedy and Willingboro High Schools since 1985, his bands have won numerous awards and are noted particularly for their ability to "entertain" audiences. The jazz band, in particular, has won 1st place at the Berklee College of Music High School Jazz Festival six times, with an additional seven years as a finalist. Jeff has served the NJ-IAJE board since 1989 as a Region President, Secretary, Treasurer, and President-Elect.

**Congratulations to the following
schools who competed in the
NJ-IAJE Jazz Finals:**

Division I

Bridgewater-Raritan Moonglowers
Bridgewater-Raritan Tuesday
Creative Arts High School
Eastern High School
JP Stevens High School
Jackson High School
Southern High School
West Orange Jazz 1

Division II

Mainland High School
Nottingham High School
Scotch Plains/Fanwood High School
Scotch Plains Moonglowers
Seneca High School
Shawnee High School
Steinert High School
Westfield High School

Division III

Burlington City High School
Depford High School
Hopewell High School
North Burlington Regional High School
Ramsey High School
South Plainfield High School
Sparta High School
Willingboro High School

**Look for competition results and
details in the Fall 2007 *Jersey Jazzer*.**

A Note From Art Martin:



As many of you know, I will be leaving New Jersey and moving to Florida on July 31st.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many friends I have made and colleagues I have work with throughout the 35 + years that I have been working in New Jersey.

New Jersey is a great state and is alive and well with all aspects of music education. I will miss all of you very much. My email will remain the same right now which is either ammartin@verizonmail.com or ammartin27@verizon.net.

I hope to hear from you from time to time and if any of you get to Florida, let me know in advance and we can get together.

Thanks again for making my professional and educational experience in NJ the best it could be.

Regards,
Art Martin

IAJE Teacher Training Institutes

This summer's dates and locations:

June 14-16, 2007
Ecker Hill Auditorium
Park City, Utah

June 21-23, 2007
Moravian College
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania ~ USA.

For more information, go to:
<http://www.iaje.org/iaje.aspx?pid=9>

Advertise in the *Jersey Jazzer*!

The *Jazzer* is a great way to reach people within the NJ jazz community. To place an ad, please contact *Jazzer* editor, Jody Moody, azjomo@gmail.com. You will receive ad space in the fall printed edition and space in the spring online edition for no extra charge. Submissions for the fall edition are due to Jody by September 15, 2007.

Rates: 1/2 page: \$100 1/4 page: \$50 (black and white only)

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News From Around The State

Pictures from Region I Events: Region I President, Ryan Krewer



Left: Mr. Dave White and Jr. High Ensemble;

Below: Mr. Ryan Krewer, Region I President speaking to the audience.



Vocal Jazz News: Dr. Diana Dohrmann, Vocal Jazz Liaison

The 2007 New Jersey Honors Jazz Choir vocalists were selected at the May 7th auditions. Our 2007 conductor is Justin Binek, Director of Vocal Jazz Studies at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Previously, he was Assistant Director of Western Michigan's "Gold Company". He has received two "Downbeat" Music Awards, one for "Outstanding Collegiate Vocal Jazz Soloist". Justin is also a member of the 12 voice "Voices of Pops", affiliated with Peter Nero's "Philly Pops". We are delighted that Justin is joining us this year!

Diana Dohrmann, Vocal Jazz Liaison

Region Two: Mr. Ron Heller, President

What a fantastic Region 2 jazz concert we had! Proof positive that jazz is alive and growing in central New Jersey. Many special thanks to all of the participating directors for sending their talented students to audition, your participation is key to our success. The HS ensemble was directed by Mr. Larry Markiewicz from Bridgewater-Raritan High School. This group gave a truly incredible performance of very challenging music. Our Junior High Ensemble was directed by our very own Art Martin and was also an amazing performance that audiences and students thoroughly enjoyed. The concert was also a special afternoon for us at NJ-IAJE, as it marks one of the last area performances by Mr. Art Martin as he is moving to Florida at the end of July. Art has been a staple of Jazz Education in NJ for over 40 years, and has been involved in all aspects of jazz education from serving as a member of our board on just about every position, to founding the Jazz for Teens Program at NJPAC. He has served as Teacher, Musician, Clinician, Adjudicator, Mentor, and Friend, and we will all miss Art's never-ending contribution to the advancement of jazz education and wish him luck on his future endeavors. Special Thanks to Mr. Adam Warshafsky, our Audition Manager and Director of Bands at Montgomery High School for a fine job in his first year! Also, thank you to Mr. Andy Veiss, for hosting a rehearsal and also the Montgomery BOE and Montgomery Upper Middle School for hosting rehearsals and the concert. In addition, NJ-IAJE hosted the Bridgewater-Raritan Middle School Jazz Festival, hosted by Dave Eck. This festival provided an excellent opportunity for middle school jazz ensembles to perform and showcase their many talents. If there are any directors who are interested in directing one of our region ensembles, please send an email of interest as well as a sample program and a brief resume to me at rheller@mtsd.k12.nj.us.

Sincerely,
Ron Heller, Region 2 President

Region Three: Mr. David Thomas May, President

We are happy to report that both the Jr. and Sr. High 2007 Jazz bands enjoyed a fantastic experience. Thanks begin with Len Nicholas the Reg. III Jazz Auditions Chair and host at Lenape Regional HS. The participating directors and teachers made the auditions process a great success. We continue with our thanks to Ms. Deb Knisely at Cinnaminson HS for hosting the Region III rehearsals and concert. Once again the facilities and services made available to our region band members was first rate. Special thanks go out to all south Jersey Jazz Band manager Elton Gjermo. Elton's help was always there and very much appreciated. Thanks and congratulations go out to the members of the NJ-IAJE executive board for their help and guidance for the region events.

Last but not least, we thank the student members of both bands. These young people worked very hard and came up big on Sunday afternoon! They played great, entertained the small but enthusiastic audience and were very impressive. Special recognition and congratulations are extended to Mr. Michael Anzuini, director of bands at Steinert High School, for his fine work conducting the Reg. III Junior High Jazz Band and Mr. Jeffrey Lesser, director of Bands at Willingboro High School, for his great job conducting the Senior High Band. As for myself, well let's just say that my experience conducting the senior high band moved me and that is no joke! Both of these bands presented a strong and varied repertoire that also provided the students with a great learning experience. The styles of the musical selections were varied, challenging, and entertaining. The soloists from both bands were also very creative and impressive. To hear for your self you can get a CD of the concert by emailing Mr. Fred Truntz from NorthShore Audio at fruntz@comcast.net and getting the details to place your order.

Region III NJ-IAJE is proud to congratulate the Northern Burlington County Regional High School Jazz Band and their Director Mr. John Lindner, as the 2007 NJ-IAJE Division III champions! Congratulations also go out to all 24 bands who made the 2007 finals this year and the Division I Champions Bridgewater-Raritan Regional HS, and Scotch Plains- Fanwood HS in Division II. Last but not least special thanks and appreciation for a job well done to Mr. Dick Graham and all his work on the state festival and Dr. Jeff Kunkel as he finishes his term as President of NJ-IAJE. These two gentlemen exemplify what NJ-IAJE is all about: Education, Excellence, and Enthusiasm!

Sincerely yours,
Mr. David Thomas May, Region 3 President