



Sierra Jazz Society Newsletter Volume I - Issue 3 Spring 2007

"Tradition is not the worship of ashes, but the preservation of fire." — Gustav Mahler

Nevada County Music Expo

Saturday April 28th
9am to 9pm
Veteran's Hall
255 South Auburn Street
Grass Valley

Sierra Jazz Society will have a booth at the first ever Nevada County Music Expo set for 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, April 28, at Veterans' Hall, 255 S. Auburn Street in Grass Valley.

Come to listen to the various workshops and see the presentation of "The Grassies" Music Awards 2007. At our booth we'll show continuous loop DVDs of Jazz Masters and a photo slideshow of last year's Jazz Camp. Register for Jazz Camp at the Expo and you'll get a discount of \$25.

Stern Scholarship

Musicians in grades five to eight, who play any instrument or sing, are eligible to apply for a \$400 scholarship that can be used for music lessons, music camps, or to help buy an instrument.

The scholarship is offered through the generosity of Emil and Hulda Stern of Nevada City. Applications must be postmarked by Friday, April 27, so don't delay in contacting Julia Glasse for a copy.

julia@sierrajazzsociety.com or call (530)273-0568.

Alumni Party a Success!

We hope you'll join us when we have another Alumni Party and Jam. We're aiming for June. It was fun to sit in with the rhythm section led by Bill Douglass. Next time we hope to offer dinner and dessert in addition to music.

Hemispheres Returns June 10

Sierra Jazz Society will continue its concert series at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 10 at the Besemer Concert Hall with the exciting group, Hemispheres.

Besides Jazz Camp faculty members Bill Douglass on bass and Ian Dogole, multi-percussion, Hemispheres includes Frank Martin on piano and Sheldon Brown and Paul McCandless on sax, flute, oboe, and bass clarinet.

Tickets will be \$20 at the door, \$15 for Jazz Camp alumni or who have registered for Jazz Camp 2007 or anyone who prepays. Contact Julia Glasse for more information: julia@sierrajazzsociety.com or call (530)273-0568.

The Besemer Concert Hall is located at 11417 Red Dog Road, Nevada City.

Junior Jazz Camp – Fun Had by All!

Junior Jazz Camp ignited an afternoon of musical creativity, improvisation and fun. Let us know if you're interested in another workshop for ages 8-12.



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Faculty Corner



Each newsletter features ideas from faculty members about practicing, listening to, and playing jazz.

This time we present an article by voice teacher, Stephanie Bruce.

Dealing with Stage Fright

Have you ever sat in the audience at a musical performance and wondered how those musicians manage to get through a performance without showing even a trace of stage fright? You imagine yourself in the same situation and you are terrified at the very thought of standing up in front of people singing or playing your instrument. What if you make a mistake? What if you lose your place, or simply draw a blank, faint, shake uncontrollably, or sound generally terrible in front of all your friends and family?

Stage fright is a pretty universal feeling. Sure there are some people who thrive on the attention of the spotlight, but most of us face this hurdle at some point in our performance lives, and for some of us it never really goes away. So, why do this thing that turns your insides to jelly and sets you up for the torment of humiliation? Well, there are few things in life that I know of that are as rewarding as playing music with other musicians for an audience of people who are there to listen and enjoy it. I have a core belief that fear should never be the thing that keeps you from doing what you want to do. So here are a few ideas that might help:

1. You're not alone. Don't beat yourself up if you are afraid to perform or think that it's an inappropriate feeling. Nearly every human being likes and needs affirmation for what we do and taking risks in that regard, in front of an audience, is scary.
2. It's just a mistake, and it's just music. Let's put this in perspective. If you play a wrong note or come in at the wrong time – nobody dies. There are people in the world doing much worse things than this, and nobody even blinks.

3. Preparation helps. It's one of the few things that is within your control. The better prepared you are, the more secure you'll feel, especially if you are temporarily out of body and have to go on automatic pilot.
4. Other musicians, or your friends and family who ridicule you for being less than great in performance have some growing up to do. Remember, if anyone puts you down after you perform – it's their problem, not yours.
5. There is no substitute for just logging hours on stage. To a large degree, the fight or flight response to performing, and the uncomfortable symptoms that go along with it, are initially out of your control. You do your best and then you surrender. The more you do this the easier it gets. I promise.
6. Always be ready to laugh at yourself. Laughter is the great diffuser of discomfort. Get your ego out of the way and allow yourself to be ridiculous in front of people. Everyone will feel more at ease if you can poke fun at yourself, then move on.
7. Courage. It means being afraid and doing it anyway. Courage is a character trait that allows you to take the risks that make life more meaningful and satisfying. Safety is highly overrated. Remember the cowardly lion? "If I only had the nerve."

Stage fright: There is no magic word or potion that will take it away if it's part of who you are. But you can work with it, you can turn it around, you can learn from your mistakes and your successes. Music is a path that lasts a lifetime and the gifts that you reap along the way are well worth trouble. When you feel afraid and think it's all too much, ask yourself: What if I couldn't do this anymore? What if I couldn't play music at all? Now that's a depressing thought, right?

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