

MO-IAJE

2007 Spring Newsletter



Dear Members and Friends,

Greetings! The year is winding down, and most of us look forward to stepping aside from the routine of duties for a short time and make accomplishments in other areas.

Our unit will be undergoing a change soon. The membership has received ballots to vote for new officers in the next two-year term. Tim AuBuchon will move from President-elect to President. Thank you to Stan Minor for his service as the unit president the past two years. I hope that each and every member will return their ballot as this decision will directly affect the climate of our state unit over the next 6 years.

The Missouri Unit is always looking for your input on matters as they pertain to elections, clinicians, awards, and audition materials. In addition, I would wholeheartedly welcome your thoughts, news, articles, and other announcements for this newsletter. Please feel welcome to visit our site and participate in officer nominations, Jess Cole Award nominations, article submissions, or anything you'd like to see added to the newsletters and/or website.

Thank you for the support you have shown to the state organization. If you are not a member, you can easily become one by visiting the IAJE website at www.iaje.org.

Sincerely,

Jeff Melsha
Secretary/Webmaster, MOIAJE

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2007-08 State Jazz Band Auditions

District and State Jazz Auditions will be here soon. Your District Coordinators and Jazz Vice Presidents will be communicating specific dates and times with you. The list of materials and requirements can be found on the website. Antonio J. Garcia has graciously agreed to write the MOIAJE commission for 2007-08. Audition excerpts written and arranged by him will appear on the MOIAJE website later this summer.

Many of you have one thing on your mind right now...a little summer vacation followed by marching band camp! Don't forget that while the tasks that are ahead of you seem daunting, your students will handle what you give them and more. Don't wait until October to get the jazz band audition material to them. Have it ready to hand out to them when they come in for camp. Should you need assistance with auditions or need another set of the Dave Aaberg etudes, you may contact your district jazz vice president, or email me at jamelsha@sbcglobal.net



State Constitution and By-laws Revised

After a full membership vote last fall, we were successful in amending our by-laws and constitution. As you may remember, a majority of these changes involved the organization name change to *International Association for Jazz Education* from *International Association of Jazz Educators*. Other changes involved the addition of a vice president position on the executive committee and the realignment of duties in the executive committee offices.

The fully amended and current constitution and by-laws can be viewed on the MOIAJE website at www.moiaje.org

A Letter from our President...

Thank you to all you Jazzers out there. The response from this year's MMEA Conference/Workshop was tremendous. I have been inundated with email expressing how much they enjoyed the convention on all levels and areas: Orchestral, Concert Band, Choral, and Jazz. All the groups were great and the sessions were sold out.

From performance to clinic, each added something unique to the convention. Our sessions hopefully opened our eyes to new and diverse ways for our students to creatively express themselves musically through improvisational ideas. We hope that we provided ample opportunities for each of us to share as well as learn new concepts.

Our honor jazz groups enthused and rejuvenated each of us, not only through the music, but through the style of presentation. Mike Parkinson and the Webster University Big Band always have something special, like their seamless program from one tune to the next. We thank and say a great job to Bob Spiegelman and the Lindbergh Jazz Band for their outstanding performance; especially with the school pulling double duty this year.

The Gateway City Big Band added a trip down memory lane for many of us, with the sound of the swing era, while showing us that there is a musical life after high school and college where everyone can play in a community group of some kind.

The banquet Friday night was a great way to unwind and share some fun and frivolity with Jerry Hoover and the Missouri State "Dues Band". It truly was an exhilarating experience, especially when Elvis showed up.

We need to send out a big thank you to Jim Widner and his Big Band. What a fantastic job at the mixer. It is always such a trip to hear from the pros.

And finally, what would the end of the convention with the awesome performances of our All-State Groups. This set of concerts truly has to be one of the finest in a long time. What a wonderful event that we provide for our young musicians. Students, parents, and directors; Well Done.

Stan Minor

"LISTEN"...."BUT HOW, AND TO WHAT?"

I've had the extreme fortune of being asked to adjudicate a few jazz competitions over the past couple of years. I am a rookie at this, and apologize to directors if my comments have not been helpful, but I know that the experience has made me a better educator and a better listener. I've especially enjoyed the festivals that allow the adjudicator to work briefly with the band. If I had to summarize the comments made from most adjudicating panels, I believe it can be narrowed down to, "You've got to listen more".

Most of us have heard the phrase, "You've got to listen". I've heard it on my tapes, I've heard it directed to other bands, and I've said it myself to other bands. I've attended clinics by Jon Faddis, Michael Brecker, Clark Terry, and Wynton Marsalis. They told me to "go listen".

I began to buy recordings of the recommended artists. I listened to them intently and leisurely. I shared these recordings with my students. I was proud that I took the advice of the pros. Still, my groups were told to "listen". I purchased more recordings, this time of specific bands. I hoped that the rhythm section of Hancock, Carter, and Williams would magically rub off onto my students. Yet, we were told to go listen. I began to wonder if we were listening correctly.

Build a library of recordings for you and your students and listen regularly. But don't stop here! This was my problem. I would check recordings out to students and be happy I went the extra mile – but looking back, I only went the first 50 feet.

Until my students did their first compare and contrast essay on Coltrane and Rollins, they didn't understand how to listen. After a student transcribed and played along with Miles on *Autumn Leaves*, he began to understand how to listen. When my lead alto matched the volume and style of Marshall Royal, I knew he had listened to *Straight Ahead*. When my piano player began using quartal harmony, I knew he listened to and read Frank Mantooth. Combining good right hand technique with Kai and J.J. is a recipe for a relaxed trombone solo.

Help your students become active listeners and guide them through the process that will help them make connections. Make their listening apply to something specific in their playing.. Will this take more time? Yes! But since it seems to be a popular demand for bettering our performances, wouldn't it be worth the time spent?

By the way, you will get lost for days in recommended recordings if you Google "100 Jazz Recordings" Have fun listening!

Jeff

