

JAZZ NOTES

JACKSONVILLE JAZZ SOCIETY, INC.

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<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/organizations/jacksonville-jazz-society-inc>

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Game Night

Saturday, March 21st 4:00p-8:00p
Hosted by Deborah Melvin - Bring your A-game, your crew, and get ready for an evening of connection, prizes, and nonstop entertainment!

* 3rd Annual Membership Barbecue

Saturday, April 11th 11:30a-6:00p
Held at Hanna Park, we are celebrating our amazing members and welcoming new ones into the JJS family.

* JJS takes on New Orleans!

Thursday, April 16th-Sunday, April 19th
For Jazz Appreciation Month Members and Friends will travel to New Orleans for the French Quarter Festival!



Edited By: Stan Skinner

Jazz on Point

Charlie "Bird" Parker possessed such an extraordinary memory that he could hear a piece of music once and play it back perfectly, often in multiple keys. Parker reportedly memorized the entire Stravinsky catalog and could quote classical compositions during his improvisations. He practiced with such intensity that neighbors complained, and he

once practiced a single phrase for eleven hours straight until he mastered it. This dedication paid off when he became one of the architects improvisation. Parker's ability to hear and internalize complex musical structures allowed him to create the sophisticated melodic lines that became his signature.

Message from our President!

Jacksonville Jazz Society Members & Friends,
As we welcome the new program year for the Jacksonville Jazz Society, the 2025-2026 Executive Board and Committee Chairpersons are filled with excitement for the rhythm, soul, and connection this year promises to bring. Looking back, we are deeply grateful for the music and memories we have shared. Your passion and dedication to jazz and jazz appreciation have made and will continue to make the Jacksonville Jazz Society a true community treasure. This year, we're excited to expand our horizons with new events and opportunities to celebrate the vibrant art form that unites us. Stay tuned for our upcoming calendar on our updated website and let's make a symphony of collaboration and creativity!



Where are They Now!?

Makobi Marshall

Makobi Marshall, recipient of the 2015 Wayne Barlow scholarship, is a proud alumnus of Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, where he majored in Music (Band) and began sharpening his craft as a dedicated young musician. Since receiving the scholarship, Makobi continued his musical journey at the prestigious Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, where he graduated in 2022. In recent years, he has collaborated with various musicians, participated in multiple recording projects, and produced original music of his own —further establishing himself as a growing force in the industry. Makobi shares that JJS can continue to support him by telling his story and remaining the strong, thriving local jazz society that has inspired so many musicians. He expresses deep appreciation for all the support he has received and is grateful to see the society continuing to flourish.



"Don't settle for anything less than you are worth and spread your wings ! The sky is the limit and there is so much out there within music and beyond it too! "

— Makobi Marshall

Year to Date in Pictures



Mix-n-Mingle: New Member Welcome held at Mad O Caribbean and Seafood on Saturday, January 24, 2026.



Black History Month Jazz Jam held at the Venue in Kingdom Hall Plaza on Saturday, February 21, 2026.



Black History Month Jazz Jam Theme: A Century of Black Commemorations - A Tribute to Jazz Leaders.



JJS Vendor Booth at the Melanin Market-Black History Month Parade & Market on Saturday, February 28, 2026.



January General Body Meeting

Jazz Education - Bruce Royal

The Jacksonville Jazz Society kicked off 2026 with its January membership meeting at the Mary Lena Gibbs Community Center, located at 6974 Wilson Blvd. During the educational segment, local drummer and society member, **Bruce Royal** delivered an informative presentation. Mr. Royal explored the origins of the drum set and showcased the unique sound of the second line rhythm, skillfully combining the snare, bass, and hi-hat. Renowned in Jacksonville's music community, Bruce Royal gained recognition for his contribution to the song "This Many Miles," which achieved its distinctive style after he introduced a floating drum groove. He is widely respected for his creativity, with a colleague noting, "Few musicians would have the creativity to perform that song." Many consider Bruce Royal an exceptional and inventive musician.

Get Involved!

Interested in joining a committee or volunteering? Check out the full list on our website or reach out to Membership at jjsmembership@jacksonvillejazzsociety.org



Jacksonville Jazz History

Tenor Saxophonist Al Waters



Saxophonist Al Waters *Florida Times-Union*

Born in Alabama and raised in Jacksonville, Al Waters graduated from New Stanton Senior High School and went on to study at Florida A&M University with a music scholarship. His dedication to music led him to join the Ray Charles band, where he played from 1990 to 2000. Al toured the world with the band, visiting five continents, until he had to leave due to a kidney ailment.

He recalls that playing with Ray Charles was a profound learning experience, marking a decade he cherished as the most enjoyable time of his life. After returning to Jacksonville, Al performed with numerous local musicians until his passing. In the accompanying photo, Al is pictured playing alongside Jacksonville percussionist “Doc Handy.”

14th Annual Wayne Barlow Scholarship Fundraiser



It’s that time of year again! Mark your calendars for our 14th Annual Wayne Barlow Scholarship Fundraiser happening Saturday, August 29, 2026 from 6:00p–11:00p at the Adam W. Herbert University Center on the University of North Florida’s campus! This unforgettable evening supports the next generation of jazz musicians in our community.

The Wayne Barlow Scholarship Application is now open to all high school seniors and college students in Duval and surrounding counties who are studying Jazz. Apply online through our website – deadline is April 30th! Ticket sales and sponsorship opportunities are coming soon. Let’s celebrate jazz and invest in our future musicians together!



A musical act at the French Quarter Festival in 2016
Photo by Zack Smith Photography

April – Jazz Appreciation Month

JJS takes on New Orleans!!

Get ready, JJS! We’re heading to New Orleans on April 16–19, 2026, to celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month in true style! We will travel west together on a motorcoach for a weekend filled with incredible music, culture, and unforgettable memories. Join us as we celebrate with our co-founder Na’im Rashid at the legendary Dew Drop Jazz & Social Hall and enjoy a lively Jazz Dinner Cruise aboard the iconic Steamboat Natchez, and take in all the sites and sounds during the French Quarter Festival. A few seats are still available—\$325 secures your spot on the motorcoach! Hotel accommodations are \$570 for three nights, with the room block reserved until March 13, 2026 the hotel reservation and hotel payment is your responsibility. Your credit card will be charged for one night 30–days hours prior to arrival. Don’t miss this unforgettable jazz experience –email president@jacksonvillejazzsociety.org or jacksonvillejazzsociety@gmail.com for more details!

Renew your Membership !

