

JIVE TALKIN'

Fall 2021

Volume 22, Issue 4

'The Essence of Ella' a fun and memorable evening

The party saluted the legendary jazz vocalist, raised funds for FOJ and was a ton of fun.

If you weren't at the Fullerton Elks Lodge on November 14, you missed "The Essence of Ella Fitzgerald," a streamlined version of one of Debbi Ebert's most popular shows from the "Divalicious!" series she has created and performs.

The event hosted 50 patrons who enjoyed a salute to the legendary Fitzgerald and a fun party with pasta dinner, a Christmas-themed silent auction, 50/50 drawing and selections from the wine table.

The show put the spotlight on Debbi and her dynamite quartet: husband Richard Abraham on keyboard, Larry Fresch on saxophone and vocals, and Jeff Segal on drums.

Ella's material represented the Great American Songbook



in all its glory, and that's the case with Debbi's show. While she rattled off the storied names of our greatest jazz, Broadway and pop composers, the bulk of her selections represented four key figures: Duke Ellington, Harold Arlen, George Gershwin and Cole Porter.

FOJ members were treated to "Take the A Train" and "Satin

Doll" and "I've Got It Bad and That Ain't Good" (Ellington); "Come Rain or Come Shine" and "Stormy Weather" (Arlen); "S Wonderful," "Embraceable You" (Gershwin); and "I've Got You Under My Skin" (Porter).

The quartet played "A Tisket, A Tasket," "Blue Skies," "Mack the Knife" and "Just a Closer

Walk with Thee."

Patrons took to the dance floor after dinner while Debbi and company performed a string of audience requests.

Larry Fresch gave Debbi a chance to catch her breath, taking over on lead vocals here and there, including a stellar "Fly Me to the Moon."

*Please see **ELLA**, page 3*

2022 Sponsors Party slated for January 23

The annual Friends of Jazz Sponsors Party has tentatively been scheduled for the evening of Sunday, January 23.

Time and location have yet to be determined, but the event's live jazz music has been set: As they did for the January, 2020, event (see the photo at right), jazz students from Fullerton College will perform at the

2022 Sponsors Party, under the direction of Bruce Babad.

The Sponsors Party is our way of saying thank you to those at the Sponsor level of membership (\$250 per year) or higher – Patron (\$500/year), Benefactor (\$1,000/year) and Gold Benefactor (\$2,500+ per year).

Stay tuned for the venue, time and other details. 🎵



College jazz programs are grateful for Friends of Jazz

On Saturday night, October 9, the Fullerton Jazz Orchestra and the Fullerton Jazz Chamber Ensemble delivered a whole evening of jazz presented by the CSUF School of Music and directed by Bill Cunliffe and Rodolfo Zúñiga, with each appearing as a special guest as the other conducted.

The 18-piece ensemble performed five numbers. "Muchacha" featured special guest Gilbert Castellanos on trumpet, and the closing number, "The Whistler," brought him back out along with fellow special guest Bill Cunliffe on piano.

The 17-piece orchestra opened with "Alone Together," popularized by Count Basie and Buddy Rich; the Sammy Nestico tune "Ya Gotta Try"; and Bob Mintzer's "Funk City Ola."

Before announcing the remaining selections, Bill talked about Friends of Jazz and its significance in supporting college jazz studies programs like CSUF's. He thanked FOJ for its many proactive years and placed FOJ's value to CSUF in context by reminding everyone of the high cost of a college education.

"Most major colleges charge between \$30,000 and \$60,000 per year." By contrast, he said, CSUF is just \$6,800 per year.

Just the same, Bill said, "most of these



TOP: FOJ's Nick Batinich and Colleen Wadsworth flank CSUF's Bill Cunliffe, who expressed thanks for FOJ at an Oct. 9 concert. BELOW: Fullerton College jazz faculty members, the Jazz Cadré, perform on November 9. (Top photo: Eric Marchese. Bottom photo: Judi McDuff)

kids have to work, save and scrape. When you give to Friends of Jazz, you're giving to our students."

Bill introduced FOJ's board president, Colleen Wadsworth, and chief financial officer, Nick Batinich, and invited them to take the stage. Noting that FOJ has been giving to CSUF for 22 years, the duo then handed a check to Bill for \$6,000 for the school's jazz program.

Bill had just a few more words before directing the last few selections: "Thank you, Friends of Jazz, for all your support."

A month later, on November 9, Fullerton College held a similar event at its Campus Theatre. This one featured the jazz faculty's band, The Jazz Cadré. Audiences were treated to the world-class talents of Jamie Shew, Bruce Babad, Mike Scott, Jeremy Siskind, Lyman Medeiros and Matt Johnson. 🎵

Friends of Jazz, Inc.

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Shop at Ralphs and you'll help Friends of Jazz

Friends of Jazz members who shop at Ralphs and have a Ralphs Rewards Card can help FOJ receive funds every time they shop. The program is called Ralphs Community Contributions, and here's how it works: Call 800-443-4438 and hold the line until a Community Contributions operator comes on. Tell them you want to register with the program set up for Friends of Jazz, Inc. Give them our name (Friends of Jazz), your name, and your rewards card number (on the back of your card beneath the bar code).

This will link your Ralphs Rewards Card to FOJ. Each time you use your

card when you shop, between 1% and 4% of your eligible purchases (most everyday food items) will be donated as cash to FOJ. Be sure to renew your participation in this program after 1 year. 🎵

Welcome back to our renewing members!

Friends of Jazz welcomes and thanks these members who have just renewed:

Dale and Sue Boatman
Barbara Gregory
Doris McGrath
John and Kerry Phelps

Party salutes the legendary Ella Fitzgerald



ELLA, continued from page one

Guest artist Jennifer Hart performed more great jazz standards vocalized by Ella: "Misty" and "How High the Moon."

Next up was special guest Bill Cunliffe, who spelled Richard at the piano for "Summertime," with Debbi on lead vocals and featuring outstanding solos by Larry on saxophone and Bill on piano.

The successful evening closed with three iconic Ella tunes: "I've Got You Under My Skin," "Over the Rainbow," and "Our Love Is Here to Stay." 🎵

A year-end note from Friends of Jazz to our members

Another year draws to a close, and for most, it has been a year like no other.

For Friends of Jazz, one thing has remained constant, and that's our determination to continue to raise funds to assist the countless students who have come to rely upon support from FOJ. These funds allow us to run the various programs we've been running for 22 years.

The last few weeks of each year are an ideal time to reflect upon and express appreciation. As a non-profit, we want to say thanks to all our members. If you're new, we're happy

to have you on board – and, even more so, grateful to everyone who has rejoined. Your membership funds have enabled us to help significant numbers of students.

The end of the year is also a time when people like you mull over who you want to donate to and which tax-deductible organizations, like ours, you want to help.

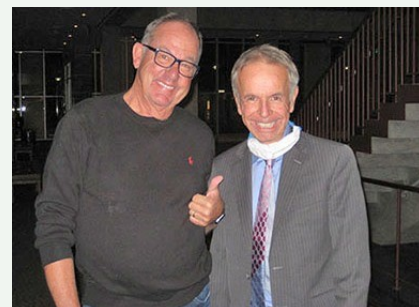
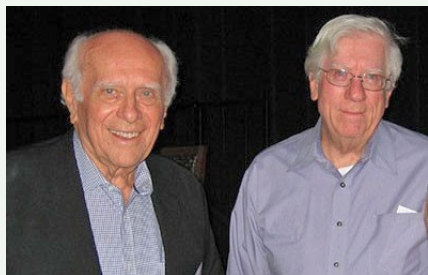
Our ongoing commitment is to the many music students working their way toward a degree – and to those who have yet to enter college.

As you reflect upon the meaning of

the winter holidays, think about the efforts of these students and the physical, mental and emotional strain caused by intense study and the commitment to succeed.

Tax-deductible contributions to FOJ help pave the way to their success. Your participation, support and devotion to Friends of Jazz keeps us going, and that keeps these deserving recipients going. So drop us an end-of-year check into the mail. It will make each student's load a little lighter – and make their holidays a little brighter. 🎵

December 3 CSUF reception is a festive gathering



Photos by Eric Marchese



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Upcoming Events:

- December 14, 2021:** John Proulx tribute to Nat King Cole,
Bayside Restaurant, Newport Beach
- January 23, 2022:** Friends of Jazz's annual Sponsors
Party, time and venue TBA

New venue for FOJ's high school jazz band program

Friends of Jazz's high school jazz band series, which features Saturday afternoon concerts during the opening months of each new year, has found a new venue for 2022.

Main Street Restaurant in downtown Yorba Linda is our new home for the program, which has been dormant since the spring of 2020.

We're still finalizing the lineup, but watch your email and the next newsletter for the latest. 🎵

AROUND TOWN



While the roster of jazz events typically thins out during the winter holidays, jazz fans can still find plenty of live performances throughout Orange County. Some are special shows booked months ago while others are ongoing weekly appearances by local favorites like Debbi Ebert and Ron Kobayashi.

The Supper Club edition of the top-notch Sunset Jazz at Bayside features jazz in a cabaret setting and combines it with dining. The outstanding series wraps up the calendar year with two great Tuesday night shows on December 7 and 14. On December 7, Sunset Jazz welcomes back the six-time Juno award-nominated jazz vocalist and pianist Carol Weisman. The evening, which celebrates the Great American Songbook, features Dave Tull (drums and vocals), Mitchell Long (guitar and vocals) and Hussain Jiffry (bass).

The December 14 concert features Grammy-winning composer and recording artist John Proulx in a special tribute to two greats: Nat King Cole and Chet Baker. Joining John are Alex Frank (bass) and Dean Koba (drums) plus famed trumpet player Carl Saunders as special guest. In addition to the jazz tributes, fans will be treated to jazz versions of favorite holiday tunes.

Bayside is located at 900 Bayside Drive, Newport Beach. Doors open at 5 p.m., with concerts from 6 to 8:30 p.m. Advance reservations are required. For more details, go to the Sunset Jazz website, sunsetjazzatnewport.com. For tickets and more information: 949-759-5003.

You might have missed Debbi Ebert's phenomenal Ella Fitzgerald concert for FOJ on Nov. 14, but you can see and hear this superb jazz vocalist every weekend at the Cedar Creek Inn restaurant in Brea, with shows starting at 6 p.m. Call 714-255-5600 for more details. Stellar pianist Ron Kobayashi is at Bayside every Thursday and Friday night. Two Saturday nights each month, Ron is at Les Amis in downtown Fullerton, backed by bass player Baba Elefante and drummer Steve Dixon. 🎵