

LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION FOR JAZZ EDUCATION

LA MUSICIAN ARTICLE

FEBRUARY 2012

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy New Year! We are now well underway with the 2nd semester and preparing for the various festivals and trips that many will participate in this spring. I want to take this time to remind everyone that the Louisiana Association for Jazz Education is always looking for new members. If you go to our website, www.lajelouisiana.org, and click on the link for membership, you'll see the directions on how to join. **Mr. Jay Ecker** has redone the website to give it a fresh look and will be doing updates periodically. If you ever have anything you want posted in regard to jazz appearances in your area, master classes, etc., feel free to let us know and we'll get it on our website. On another note, we are growing with each membership and would greatly appreciate you joining. We really want to thank everyone who joined at the recent LMEA Conference. I know you'll find L.A.J.E. very helpful along with the resources we are offering to benefit you and your programs. If you have any questions as to what L.A.J.E. is or its purpose, please feel free to contact me and I'll be glad to speak with you on this topic (apizzo@ebrschools.org). ALSO, on the site is the information on the various jazz festivals that are going on this semester: ***The Northwestern State University/L.A.J.E. State Jazz Festival*** in Natchitoches on *Sat. Mar. 3*. The guest will be Getzen Trumpet Artist Mike Vax; ***The Loyola University Jazz Ensemble Festival*** in New Orleans on *Fri. Mar. 9 and Sat. Mar. 10*. The guest artist will be trombonist Ed Neumeister; ***The Banners/McNeese State University Jazz Festival*** will be on *Sat. May 5*. They will have saxophonist Tom Scott as their guest artist. All information for fees, forms, contact numbers, and emails are on the site. Even if you are just getting your jazz program started or it is just a 2nd semester ensemble, expose your students to the experience of a jazz festival. One of the biggest differences, in my opinion, between a concert band festival and a jazz band festival has to do with the "hands-on" comments. One of the stage judges gives your band a master class style clinic immediately following your performance. This is a "positive" environment and takes away the pressures of the sight-reading process. Yes, you can receive some fairly general comments, but the comments tend to be more of a one on one or small group lesson in which you can take away individual information to put into your arsenal of jazz teaching techniques. The comments seem to be more personal and geared toward a more specific educational aspect for you and your band's development. If nothing else, consider taking some of your students to listen to some of the bands at these festivals. Listening is the single most important teaching tool that we have when trying to learn the various styles of jazz and what a jazz musician sounds like. Besides listening, the guest artists are top notch and will perform, as well as give master classes, and always are the highlight to the festival. I also want to remind you about the Jazz Education

Network (www.jazzednet.org). This is another valuable tool to access in order to work at development for you and your jazz ensemble.

Trust me, L.A.J.E. is growing and will only turn into what you would like it to be for jazz education in Louisiana. Help create a better state of jazz for our tomorrow by joining L.A.J.E. today! Again, feel free to browse our website and contact us with your questions and concerns. We are here to serve you for the greater good of jazz in our schools.