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Jazz Goes to School Wraps Up Season with Finale at Vilar Center

April 12, 2005 - Vail Colorado - Jazz Goes to School wrapped up its seventh year in Eagle County Schools with three complimentary performances at the Vilar Center for the Arts, Beaver Creek this past Monday, April 11 and Tuesday, April 12, 2005.

The fourth and final session, titled "A Tribute to the Giants of Jazz", featured the 6th Annual Jazz Goes to School Student Concerts at the Vilar Center for all elementary school students who participated in the program. The Student Concerts demonstrated all of the concepts taught in the first three classroom sessions and featured music written and/or performed by the greatest jazz musicians in history as well as blues tunes written by the fifth grade students.

Jazz Goes to School is presented by the Vail Jazz Foundation (VJF) to all fourth and fifth graders in the public schools of Eagle County, plus the Eagle County Charter Academy, Vail Mountain School, Eagle Valley Christian Academy and St. Clare of Assisi. Having just completed its seventh year, Jazz Goes to School reaches over 1,000 students per year, and has exposed over 10,000 school students to jazz music.

Local jazz musician and professional jazz educator, Tony Gulizia (keyboard and vocals), directs the Jazz Goes to School program. Tony's brother, Joey (drummer) is also a professional jazz musician and educator, co-presents the sessions. Other professional musicians and clinicians who assist the Gulizia brothers include – Kirk Garrison (trumpet), Andy Hall (bass) and Roger Neuman (saxophone).

Jazz Goes to School is a fun and interactive program, formatted as a sequential series of four 45-minute lessons that are presented during the course of the school year. The curriculum, fully integrates jazz music education and social studies subjects, such as world/American geography and history, and has been embraced by school administrators and instructors, parents and the students. Jean Naumann, from St. Clare of Assisi stated "Many of my students take music or dance lessons and they relate very well to the program. It heightens their appreciation of music and its history. In the future, they will be more aware of types of music and of the sounds various instruments; as well as rhythm and patterns."

Up to five professional musicians present the lessons that includes age-appropriate discussions of the history of jazz and the fundamental elements comprising jazz. In addition there are demonstrations of the playing of instruments generally used in jazz and of famous jazz compositions and popular children's songs in jazz style. In every lesson students learn through participation by playing a variety of drums and percussion instruments to understand jazz rhythms; singing and clapping to demonstrate concepts such as call and response; and playing special melodic instruments in order to experience improvisation. Formal lesson plans, post-lesson plans and visual aids are provided to each of the school's music instructors to help reinforce the lessons taught in each session. By blending these subjects in a lesson plan, the educators link various social studies subjects that students are exposed to in their regular curriculum to the history of jazz in a unique and stimulating manner.

Jazz Goes to School is an interactive learning experience that is an extremely valuable enhancement of the basic school curriculum that would not otherwise be available to the students in the Eagle County public schools without the support of the VJF. Jazz is America's gift to the world and the Vail Jazz Foundation's mission is to perpetuate jazz music through live performances that showcase the artistry and talent of great jazz musicians, and through jazz education, with a focus on young musicians and young audiences. By taking jazz into the schools, we hope to create an awareness at a younger level, thus creating future audiences and potentially, future jazz musicians.

Jazz Goes to School is sponsored in part by Alpine Bank, Buckman/Blount Community Use Fund, City Market/The Kroger Foundation, Colorado Mountain Express, Eagle County RE-50J School District and PTOs, Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation, The Evjue Foundation, Taste of Vail, Vail Valley Foundation, Vilar Center for the Arts Beaver Creek, Walmart Foundation, the Colorado Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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