

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

April 2015

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VOLUME XII

ISSUE III

THE BJA NEWSLETTER

WWW.BALTIMOREJAZZ.COM

BCJS presents Terell Stafford Quintet at BMA

By Eric Heavner

A jazz concert often begins with a relaxed vibe. Jazz musicians frequently choose a medium tempo opening tune, maybe a mellow blues, to allow the musicians and audience a chance to ease into the music. Not Terell Stafford. Performing on March 8th, 2015 for the Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society's excellent Sunday concert series at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Stafford and his band launched into their first composition, Billy Strayhorn's "Rain Check," with all the drive and intensity of a race car at full throttle.

Taking the first solo, Stafford set the bar high for the evening. His smooth, dancing figures in the middle register displayed a compact, almost classical tone. But as his ideas developed and he ascended into the upper register, his tone broadened, easily filling the auditorium even when playing off the microphone. His emotion broadened too, his lines becoming more visceral. At the solo's climax, his sound was a thrilling roar. His band mates came close to matching his intensity, providing swinging solos and accompaniment. Especially notable was the crisp drumming of Billy Williams as he traded fours with the leader.

Stafford's bravura playing is not surprising. A veteran trumpeter, he has performed with jazz greats such as McCoy



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERELL STAFFORD

Taking the first solo, Stafford set the bar high for the evening. His smooth, dancing figures in the middle register displayed a compact, almost classical tone.

Tyner, Kenny Barron and Jimmy Heath and has appeared on numerous recordings, including Diana Krall's Grammy-nominated album *From This Moment On*. He is Director of the Jazz Studies and Chair of Instrumental Studies at Temple University. And besides leading his own group, he is a member of the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra.

Stafford brought a formidable group of backing musicians to the bandstand: Tim Warfield, Jr. on tenor saxophone, Bruce Barth on piano, Peter Washington on bass and Williams on drums. All but Williams performed with Stafford on his well-received album of Strayhorn compositions, *This Side of Strayhorn* (MAXJAZZ). As befitting the conven-

(continued on page 2)

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.

The Baltimore Jazz Alliance (BJA) is a grass-roots organization of jazz aficionados, musicians and venues dedicated to enhancing and promoting jazz in Baltimore and the surrounding areas. New members sharing this passion are always welcome as the BJA continues its efforts to build a stronger and better networked jazz scene. Together we can help this music thrive in the region and reward listeners and musicians alike.

BJA Priorities

- To develop new audiences for jazz
- To strengthen communication within the jazz community
- To improve media relations on behalf of the jazz community
- To bring greater visibility to the entire array of jazz offerings in the Baltimore region
- To provide greater access to performance opportunities for Baltimore-area jazz musicians

Visit www.baltimorejazz.com for information about our accomplishments and future goals.

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BCJS presents The Terell Stafford Quintet at BMA

(continued from front page)

tional post-bop line-up of trumpet, tenor and rhythm section, the quintet offered several Strayhorn compositions, three Lee Morgan tunes, and several unannounced compositions, which included an original.

"Smada," a Strayhorn composition, found the quintet in a moody state of mind. The halting melody of Morgan's "Stop Start," stated in unison by the horns, set the stage for a driving swing solo section. Washington's work on bass here demonstrated that a good bass line has as much to do with its melodic shape as with synching up rhythmically with the drummer.

A bluesy duet featuring Stafford and Barth showed the softer side of the pair. Stafford's pretty phrasing on flugelhorn gave way to a lengthy Barth solo. With room to stretch out, Barth ran the gamut from lyrical to down-home funky, the latter prompting raucous applause. A producer, arranger and composer (he has released an album of his compositions, *East and West*), Barth eschewed a bop piano style, in which single-note lines are played by the right hand, and instead made use of block chords and tremolo effects.

Warfield shined on Morgan's "Speedball." Favoring the upper part of his horn, he played with an intellectual bent—which is not to say that he lacks emotion, just that he finds different ways of building a solo. He might, for example, use a repeated figure to increase tension, as he did on "Speedball," or he might wring interesting variations out of a simple melodic phrase, as he did on several tunes.

Morgan's "Mr. Kenyatta," played slightly slower than usual, showcased the group's cohesiveness. The staccato melody played by the horns rode comfortably on top of the rhythm section's funky groove. Warfield, Stafford and Barth contributed fine solos, each handling the Latin-swing-Latin form with dexterity. Stafford's climatic high E-flat, played at the final bridge of his solo, paid homage to the composer, whose solo on the original recording was similarly structured.

From what I've seen, most Baltimore jazz fans like their music served straight ahead, with plenty of swing. Terell Stafford and his quintet delivered what they crave. And then some.

Help us support live jazz in Baltimore. Become a member of BJA.

BJA Members Receive Wammies!

Baltimore clarinetist Seth Kibel has received THREE Wammies (Washington Area Music Association awards): 2014 Jazz Instrumentalist, 2014 Children's Music Artist, and 2014 Children's Music Recording for his Jazz for Kids album, *Jazz For People Who Are Shorter Than Me*. Veronneau was nominated for Best Jazz Group and received a Wammie for Best Jazz Recording for their album *Snow Time*.

Seth Kibel recently performed at Joe Squared and often appears at the Great Sage in Clarksville and at the New Deal Café in Greenbelt.

Veronneau appeared at An die Musik last November and will be performing at Germano's on April 25th.

— Liz Fixsen

The Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society presents...



PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN ABBOTT

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10 Art Museum Drive
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More info at: www.baltimorechamberjazz.org
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BJA Members receive a \$2 discount off the general admission price!
Just indicate your affiliation when ordering tickets.

The Baltimore Chamber Jazz Society is a non-profit organization and is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.



May 3rd – Dr. Lonnie Smith Trio

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PEABODY JAZZ COMBOS

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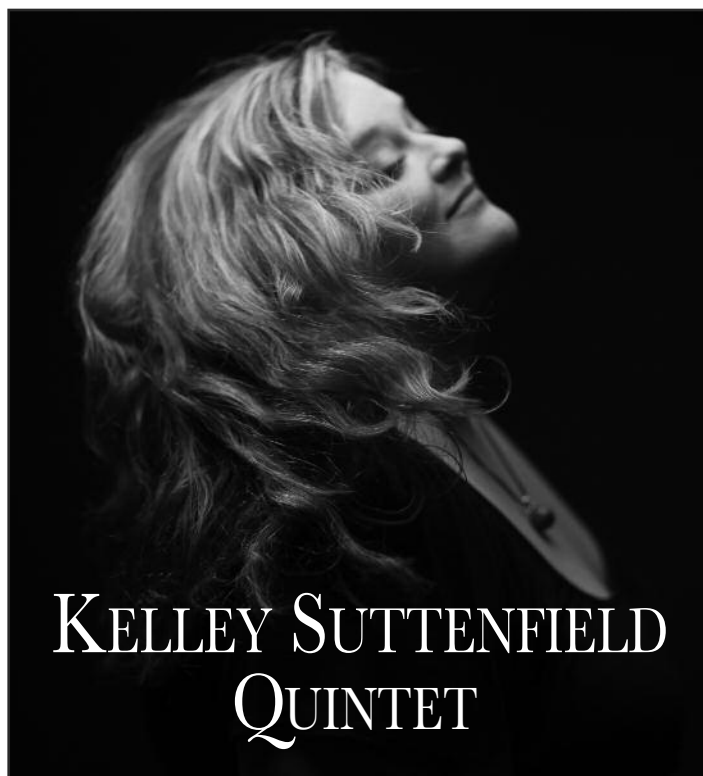
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TERRY KOGER SEXTET

The Quiet Burn

By Rhonda Robinson

The Terry Koger Sextet made their Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival debut on February 14th at the Rockville Hilton, performing in the MAJF Club venue. The ensemble presented a beautiful, centered set where you felt like you were in the good hands of self-assured artists. The group was composed of Terry Koger, alto saxophone; Benny Russell, tenor saxophone; Corey Wallace, trombone; Justin Taylor, piano; John Leonard, bass; and George Gray, drums.

There was a humorous moment at the beginning of the show when Russell briefly could not be found and was the last to the stage. Koger and the band took it all in stride, giving Russell a good-natured hard time. The first selection was Wayne Shorter's "United," in an energetic 3/4. When Wallace took the first solo, it was a straight waltz, then the rhythm section transitioned into a funky three for Russell's solo. The rhythm section quieted down for Koger's solo, which had an ethereal quality with a cascading waterfall of notes and trilling that built to a more fevered "burn" over riffs by Wallace and Russell. Taylor's solo also started off quietly, building to a hip, swinging climax with more riffs underneath.

Solos for the second tune, Joe Henderson's "Step Lightly," a sixteen-bar blues, started with Koger's understated burn, followed by Leonard's solid bass solo and Wallace's trombone offering. Then Russell turned up the juice and started "preaching" with his tenor. The crowd responded with clapping and exclamations of "Yes!!" I really enjoyed the gorgeous three-horn harmonies on the melody sections.

Even though it was Valentine's Day, Koger avoided "My

Funny Valentine" and instead presented a song that, in terms of its lyrics (look up the lyrics, y'all!!), I consider to be more romantic: Duke Ellington's "In a Sentimental Mood." Koger started the song completely unaccompanied, to dramatic effect. Wallace wove in some complementary noodling at the bridge, then became the harmony for the final A section of the song as the other musicians filled in. Taylor took advantage of the slow tempo to quote Chopin's "Marche Funebre (Funeral March)" in his solo. Koger and Wallace came back in on the bridge doing some commingled musical circles before straightening it out and harmonizing at the end.

Last was Koger's original, "Café Mocha," a tune written for the Eubie Blake Legacy Band, because the band members frequented that establishment after rehearsals. The tune had a Latin feel with unison lines in the A sections and dissonant harmonies on the bridge. Once again the players offered lively solos with riffing underneath, heightening the intensity.

Koger grew up in New Jersey, playing clarinet and bassoon as well as saxophone. He came to Baltimore to attend Morgan State University on a partial track scholarship and received his Bachelor's in Music Education. Though he has taught at the K-12 levels, he now enjoys rewarding work in nursing homes through a company called Musical Encounters, which books him in different settings for music therapy and entertainment. Koger says, "The residents get to hear a lot of standards. They really know the American Songbook. This is good training for other gigs."

Koger was very happy with the response from audience members following the concert. We both agreed that more Baltimore jazz fans would do well to attend the festival in the future to see their favorite local, regional and national artists. This summer, Koger is planning to record with the group and looks forward to another of the birthday concerts that he has been presenting annually since fall 2012.



From left: Justin Taylor, Terry S. Koger, John Leonard, Benny Russell, Corey Wallace and George Gray

Delandria Mills

By Liz Fixsen

One of Baltimore's jazz treasures is flutist Delandria Mills—as she demonstrated last December with the Eric Byrd Trio at the Eubie Blake Center, dazzling the audience with a spirited, driving rendition of “The Carol of the Bells.” But Mills has another important but perhaps lesser-known role in Baltimore's music scene: she holds down two demanding jobs as a music teacher, and also runs her own summer flute camp.

Mills teaches general music and band to around 400 first- through seventh-grade students in Henderson-Hopkins Partnership School in east Baltimore. Established in 2012 by a non-profit corporation and operated by the Schools of Education at Johns Hopkins and Morgan State, the school focuses on behavioral, cognitive, and physical health so that each child can reach his or her full potential. The school emphasizes small classes and individualized learning with family and community support.

Reflecting the school's emphasis on individualized learning, Mills often modifies her lesson plans to meet students' needs. She also teaches ninety minutes of reading each day. But she finds it exciting to teach at Henderson-Hopkins because the school truly provides a 21st-century program, equipped with state-of-the-art technology. She feels gratified to be able to bring quality music instruction to the students in a school that emphasizes reading and math, but is delighted that the music program at Henderson-Hopkins will soon add more music instructors.

Mills also teaches classical flute and runs flute sectionals and flute choir in the Preparatory division of Peabody, which she considers her “home base,” since she herself studied at the Peabody Conservatory. She teaches twenty to thirty private flute students at her church in Baltimore's Govans neighborhood, at Peabody, at her home studio, and at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary

ARTIST PROFILE

Photo courtesy of Delandria Mills



Music in New York (where she teaches in person or by way of Skype.) A few of her students are members of Orch-Kids, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's program for inner-city kids initiated by Marin Alsop, and other students are now members of the Baltimore Symphony Youth Orchestra (BSYO). This past February, Mills was thrilled that Orch-Kids and BSYO shared the stage at the prestigious Kennedy Center for a joint performance.

Finally, her third teaching involvement is her Kingdom Flute Works Summer Camp in Govans, which reaches up to 20 children, youth, and adults for four intensive days of individual instruction, ensembles, and a final recital. Students get insights into the professional aspects of music, learn to play excerpts from actual orchestral pieces, and enjoy exposure to a range of genres, including classical, pop, and jazz.

Kingdom Flute Works was born from the DemiFlute Camp which Mills began as a mentorship program in 2001, motivated by her love of kids and the needs she saw among Baltimore's children. For two years, she had worked for Baltimore School for the Arts in a satellite program serving students from distressed families. During those two years, she saw how studying music could help these

children cope with their troubled lives. When the program lost its funding, Mills started her own flute camp. In 2009, she took it to a more professional level, naming it Kingdom Flute Works Summer Camp. The camp expresses her conviction that musical mentorship is one of her special gifts.

To face each day as a teacher, Mills arises at 5:30 a.m. exercises and meditates, then begins practicing before leaving for the school. Although her demanding weekly schedule gives her precious little time to nurture her own creativity, Mills feels that teaching is very rewarding. She finds it fascinating to recognize the point at which students begin to teach themselves—no longer needing instruction as such, but rather nurturing and inspiration.

She has written the first of a series of children's novels called *Demi's Flute: Entering the Realm of Sound*; the first book is based mostly on the story of her own childhood and how she began playing flute. There is also an illustrated version of *Demi's Flute*. She is aiming to release both through Wunderland Press this spring. The book is co-authored with another Baltimore City teacher, Riley S. Brown, a kindred spirit whom Mills met in 2006.

This summer she will be teaching at jazz festivals in Italy and Canada. Because of the demands of teaching, Mills does not perform publicly as often as others of her musical stature in Baltimore. She says she would like to perform once or twice a quarter or maybe four big shows a year—a festival and venues such as the Baltimore Museum of Art. She claims that she is really a homebody, and for now, finds more satisfaction in recording than in live performing. Since 2004 she has recorded seven albums under her own label, Ephphatha Queen, and has appeared on others with leaders Todd Marcus and Warren Wolf. One ambition is to do a live recording with her former mentor, Hubert Laws. But it is her conviction that teaching music and mentoring children through music are the gifts that she is currently meant to focus on.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DELANDRIA MILLS

Delandria Mills with students from
Kingdom Flute Works Summer Camp

For this talented, creative artist, teaching may eventually take a back seat to performing—or it may not. Mills says she is open to what life may bring about musically.

Read more about Delandria Mills on her website at www.delandriamills.com

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Liam Flynn's Ale House – Monday night jam sessions hosted by Hot Club of Baltimore, mostly Django Reinhardt music, 1930s-'40s and standards. 22 W. North Avenue. 8-midnight. Call Michael Harris for more information at 443-884-2123.

TUESDAYS

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NEW! Homeslyce – Todd Marcus leads jazz jam sessions every Wednesday. Musicians and singers welcome. 336 N. Charles Street. 8-11 pm. 443-501-4000

Phaze 10 – Jam sessions at Phaze 10 hosted by April Sampe and The Next Level Band. 885 N. Howard Street. 8-midnight. 410-462-2010

THURSDAYS

Phaze 10 – First Thursday Straight Ahead Jazz Workshop Jazz Workshop hosted by John R. Lamkin II, 855 N. Howard Street. 7-11 pm. 410-462-2012

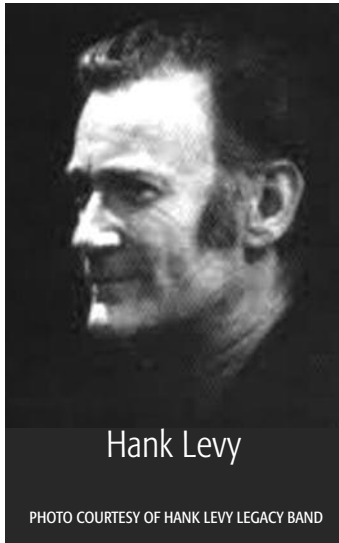
The Place Lounge – Jam session/open mic hosted by Spice. 315 W. Franklin Street. Musicians and vocalists are welcome. 7-10 pm. 410-547-2722

If you know of local jam sessions, please share the information with our readers by emailing the details to the editor at: jazzpalette@gmail.com

If any of the jazz jam sessions listed are discontinued please inform the editor at: jazzpalette@gmail.com

Baltimore Musician's Music Inspires Award-Winning Film

By Paula Anne Delve Phillips



Several concerts taking place this spring give jazz lovers the chance to explore the authentic musical treasure behind the triple Academy Award-winning film, *Whiplash*. Not everyone knows about the big band music that inspired filmmaker Damien Chazelle's musically driven story—but perhaps they should.

Henry Jacob (Hank) Levy (1927–2001) was a Baltimore saxophonist who is best known as a big band composer/arranger for Stan Ken-

ton and the Don Ellis Orchestra. He also developed the Towson University jazz program, which he directed for 21 years and where he led many award-winning student bands. High school and college students and professional musicians around the world still perform his compositions. Chazelle was among them, having played Levy's music in high school. The tune "Whiplash" was one of his favorites, and he titled his film after that tricky composition.

Levy was known for his use of odd time signatures. Unlike the overbearing character portrayed by J. K. Simmons in *Whiplash*, Levy was beloved by colleagues and students. Many continued to practice and play with him after his retirement. Thus, the Hank Levy Legacy Band was born in 1992 and continues to this day, directed by drummer Steve Ashcraft and nurtured by Hank's nephew, Stewart Levy.

Many original members continue to nail Levy's challenging tunes in Sunday morning rehearsals at Towson University. They include band manager and trombonist Bernie Robier, who promises an entertaining set list for the band's spring concerts. Listeners will enjoy such tunes as "Passacaglia & Fugue," "Between & Betwixt," and of course, "Whiplash." Says Ro-

bier, "It starts out as a funk tune in 7/4, features a solo for development, then moves into 14/8." He notes the tune's ethnic flavor that hints at Bulgarian or Greek folk music. The band will play the piece a bit faster than Levy originally intended but not at the breakneck pace heard in the film.

The Legacy Band has several recordings to its credit, including two up-tempo versions of "Whiplash" recorded in 2014. (Studio musicians recorded the version heard in the film.) The band has also recorded two live CDs: *Hank At Home* (2000) and *An "Odd-Time" Was Had by All* (2004), both distributed by Sonority Records. The original version of "Whiplash," recorded by the world famous Jazz Ambassadors on their album *The Legacy of Hank Levy*, is said to be among Levy's favorite recordings of his music.

Bethesda Blues & Jazz Supper Club hosted the Hank Levy Legacy Band in "Whiplash! The Concert Experience" on March 22. Don't miss the next concert Sunday, April 26, 2015, at 5:00 p.m. in the Harold J. Kaplan Concert Hall in the Center for the Arts at Towson University. Proceeds will benefit the Towson University Foundation. The cost is \$15 regular admission, \$10 seniors, and \$5 students. For tickets visit the Towson University website:

<http://events.towson.edu/calendar/day/2015/4/26>

For more information about the Hank Levy Legacy Band see www.hanklevyjazz.com or visit the band's Facebook page.



The Hank Levy Legacy Band has several recordings to its credit including two up-tempo versions of the piece "Whiplash" recorded in 2014

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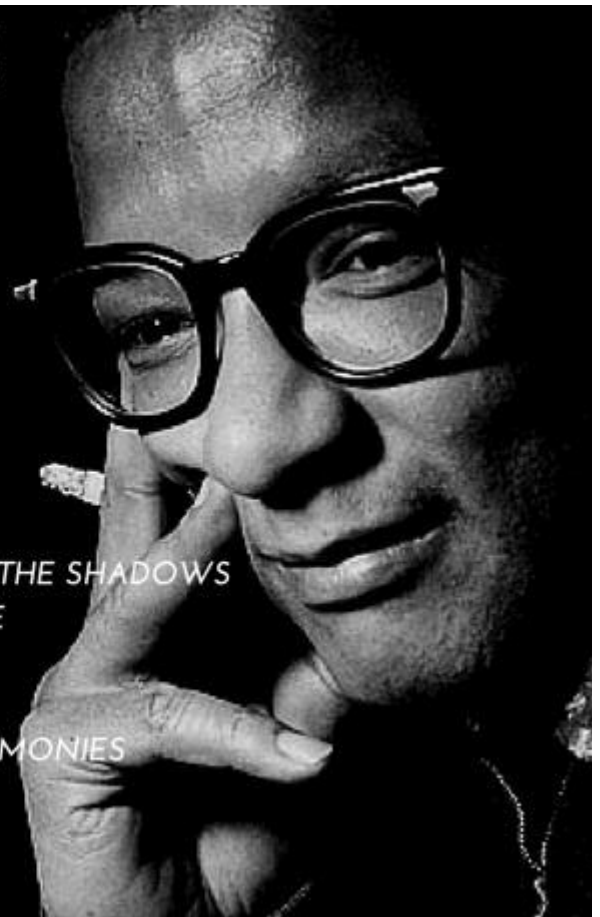
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Please indicate ad size and month(s) for placement.

REMEMBER...BJA offers FREE online promotion of your jazz events!

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Gail Marten, Editor/Designer
Baltimore Jazz Alliance Newsletter
jazzpalette@gmail.com

BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please return this form along with your check to:

THE BALTIMORE JAZZ ALLIANCE

847 N. Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201

Your membership card will be mailed to you or the person named below.

Note: All contributors of \$75 or more get a free BJA baseball cap.



First Name _____ Last Name _____

Street Address _____ Apt/Suite No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone(s) _____ Email _____

Please DESCRIBE yourself: (just one please) ☐ Music Lover ☐ Musician ☐ Producer/Promoter ☐ Agent

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AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTION: ☐ \$25 Basic ☐ \$50 Sustaining ☐ \$50 501(c)3 Organization ☐ \$75 Other

☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$200 Corporate ☐ \$15 Student – (copy of ID required)

Thank you for joining! Your membership makes a difference!

BJA has been granted 501(c)(3) status by the IRS. Anything pledged above the basic \$25 membership is tax deductible and greatly appreciated!



847 North Howard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
We are a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization



April 2015

Dedicated to promoting **JAZZ IN BALTIMORE!**



Become a member, Be the **WE** in WEAA!

WE are the listeners, **WE** are the community,
WE are the WEAA 88.9 family. Become a member today!

Ways you can Be the **WE**...

Club 88—Join CD of the Month Club

Leadership Circle—Give a gift of \$1,000 or more

Lifetime Membership—Sign up for automatic monthly payments

Vehicle Donation—Donate your car, hassle free

WEAA Membership—Purchase a membership:

\$500 Executor
\$365 Dollar-a-day Investor
\$250 Studio Fan
\$125 Supporter
\$ 88 Friend
\$ 50 Listener

Join us for...

Thursday Night Live

Phaze 10 Restaurant & Lounge
April 2nd Broadcast 8-9PM

Second Sundays Gospel Brunch

Phaze 10 Restaurant & Lounge
April 12th 1:30-3PM

Third Thursdays

Reginald F. Lewis Museum
April 16th 7PM

WE are in search for volunteers for our up-coming Spring Membership Drive. If you or your group would like to join us, call Carletta Robinson at (443) 885-2075 today!

Visit www.weaa.org or call 443.885.2075 for more information.