

the Sopris Sun

Valley digging groovy bop on Jazz Day

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Published Apr. 26, 2022

International Jazz Day is Sunday, April 30, and TACAW, Jazz Aspen Snowmass (JAS) and the Glenwood Springs Arts Council (GSAC) will provide live music for all the Valley hepcats. TACAW and JAS will together host a full day of food and music at Willits, while GSAC plans a celebration at Bethel Plaza under the Grand Avenue Bridge in the afternoon.

In 2011, International Jazz Day was designated by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) “to highlight jazz and its diplomatic role of uniting people in all corners of the globe.” Jazz Day is chaired in-part by legendary jazz pianist and composer Herbie Hancock and seeks to unite communities around the globe through the power of music — and, true to the spirit of the genre, performing simultaneously. Last year, Jazz Day events took place in over 180 countries across the globe, and in 2023 the Roaring Fork Valley will be getting in on the festivities.

“Being able to present something downvalley with TACAW is a great opportunity and hopefully will allow



us to reach a larger audience,” said JAS Senior Vice President Andrea Beard.

The events at TACAW represent JAS’s first International Jazz Day celebration and will be a mix of free and ticketed concerts throughout the day, starting with a ticketed Jazz Brunch 10am to 1pm. The brunch will feature a mix of live music and streamed performances, catered by Aspen-based company Epicure Catering.

After a brief break, some of the best young jazz performers in our corner of Colorado will play for the JAS Student Showcase. At 2pm, bands from Aspen, Roaring Fork, Glenwood Springs, Rifle and Coal Ridge high schools will take to TACAW’s main stage for a free-to-the-public performance. JAS has traditionally held the Student

Showcase in the spring, but this time will include its talented young musicians in the main festivities.

To round out the evening, Sammy Miller and the Congregation, a New York City-based seven-piece band, will take the stage at 8pm for a seated set of soulful and upbeat music. Called “joyful jazz with lots of laughs and theatricality” by the Los Angeles Times, and “brassy stomp your feet dance music” by the San Francisco Times, the Congregation has played with friends like Wynton Marsalis and OneRepublic, and performed everywhere from Newport Jazz Festival to the White House. They promise a high-energy, high-fun show designed, in their own words, “to put the generosity back into jazz and bring art back to the people.”

celebration of one of the world's most popular genres of music.

While The Congregation's performance is ticketed, TACAW will live-stream International Jazz Day celebration shows from throughout the world for free. Weather permitting (if winter ever relinquishes the spotlight), live jazz will also be performed on TACAW's outdoor stage. "With both free and ticketed events taking place throughout the day, with local and national talent, we invite everyone to come out and enjoy the music this Sunday!" said Beard.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the Valley, GSAC will host its own Jazz Day festivities from 3 to 7pm by the bridge at Bethel Plaza. Along with free live music from two local jazz groups, artists from the Glenwood Springs Art Guild will be working on a live painting. The Glenwood Springs Historical Society will join in to present the musical history of Glenwood Springs and surrounding area, and GSAC will present some of its own history. Food will not be provided at this event, but several downtown restaurants have an unobstructed view of the festivities.

"Each year on April 30, this international art form is recognized for promoting peace, dialogue among cultures, diversity and respect for human rights and human dignity," UNESCO stated. Whether you're into big New Orleans brass, cool late-night bop or groovy Latin fusion, all are invited to partake in this global