

Ray Voss Memorial Scholarship Fund Established

This year the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society has established a Ray Voss Memorial Youth Band Scholarship Fund to honor the late Ray Voss, who had been president of the Bix Society for many years. Voss was instrumental in developing the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Youth Jazz Band and establishing its scholarship program for band members when they graduate from the band and prepare for college.

The Youth Band was something Ray Voss had a passion for, expanding the music of Bix & his era to the youth of today. The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Society has been supporting this program through out the years, providing scholarships to graduating seniors to help in their pursuit of a college education. The very first recipient of a Bix Society scholarship was Josh Duffee, now a successful professional musician and music educator.

The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Society has received a generous gift for this project from Mike and Jean Steffenson of Davenport, avid jazz fans and long-time supporters of the Bix Society. The "Ray Voss Memorial Scholarships" will be awarded during the Bix Jazz Festival in Davenport's LeClaire Park at 6:45 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 6, following the performance by Andy Schumm and His Gang. Seven 2011 Bix Youth Band members will be the first recipients of the Ray Voss Scholarships, and all will continue on with their music in college this fall.

Jim Buennig, who plays alto and soprano sax, a graduate of Geneseo High School, will be attending Western Illinois University.

Christina Hesse, who plays clarinet, baritone and tenor sax, a graduate of Pleasant Valley High School, will be attending Western Illinois University.

Randall Jenkins, who plays trumpet, a graduate of Davenport Central High School, will be attending the University of Wisconsin in LaCrosse.

Jennifer Keys, pianist, a graduate of Davenport Central High School, will be attending the University of West Virginia.

Taylor Koch, who plays tenor sax, a graduate of Clinton High School, will be attending Iowa State University.

Steven Olson, who plays tenor and soprano sax, a graduate of United Township High School, will be attending Western Illinois University.

Jessalyn Small, who plays alto and soprano sax, a graduate of Clinton High School, will be attending the University of Northern Iowa.

The Bix Youth Jazz Band is composed of 19 members from area junior and senior high schools. Conductor is Michelle Jensen, Clinton High School band director.