

Our Next Concert:

Larry Toft's Red Hot Ramblers

Sunday, June 14, 2026, 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Haddonfield United Methodist Church



Photo by Jim McGann from a previous appearance – even some of the same players today!

The Red Hot Ramblers are an authentic 1920s jazz ensemble in every way. They exemplify red-hot syncopation, stompin' rhythms, and lyrical melodies associated with the Jazz Age. The repertoire can extend before and after the 1920s from the early years in Jazz, such as New Orleans Style and Ragtime, up to the swing era of the 1930s and 40s and even into the modern Second Line New Orleans parade style. The Red Hot Ramblers have been pleasing audiences in every type of venue, from concert halls to dimly-lit bars to swing dances to outdoor events/weddings. Welcome them on their return to Tri-State, to recreate their success with us from August 2021.

Today's band will include

Larry Toft – leader, trombone, vocals (pictured)

Adam Hershberger – trumpet (pictured)

Bob Rawlins – reeds

Frank Velardo – banjo

Dan Nosheny – tuba/sousaphone (pictured)

Chad Brown – drums



Made possible by funds from the Camden County Cultural & Heritage Commission, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Upcoming Society Business!

Some advance notice – as you know, Tri-State Jazz Society is a non-profit educational society, supported by its members. At our June 14 2026 concert, we will conduct the annual membership meeting to enact some society business. The chief task will be filling Board of Director positions. This will likely include the nomination and re-election of four current members: Bill Hoffman, Sally Cannon, Mark Raymond and Ed Bohrer. There is also a vacant position and we will consider nominations to fill it.

Comments, suggestions, nominations? The easiest way to respond and express interest is to email: Manage.mailer@tristatejazz.org

And of course, come in person on June 14 to participate directly.

Call for Volunteers!

Since its inception, Tri-State has been a volunteer run organization. Volunteers perform a variety of tasks – publicity, the newsletter, organizing and staging concerts... We would like to invite you to volunteer.

Two useful services –

- REFRESHMENTS – we can use additional help – volunteers to bring and set up refreshments. Volunteers are retiring and we need new volunteers so we can continue offering refreshments. Likely we will recruit helpers for both Wallingford and Haddonfield.
- Who reads the STRUTTER? Our previous editor retired, and we're doing a bare-bones job to keep it going. A new editor could take over publication. Even simpler, new contributors will help preserve it. Share your enthusiasm and expertise for this music – contribute a feature article!

The easiest way to respond and express interest is to email: Manage.mailer@tristatejazz.org

Coming Soon:

The Tri-State Jazz All-Stars

Sunday, July 12, 2026 – Community Arts Center, Wallingford PA



Photo: Marian Konop – the 2024 Tri-State All-Stars

A beloved Tri-State tradition returns with the All-Star Jam! Amateur or professional musicians from our community are invited to sit in for a song or two with Dave Robinson and his Conservatory Classic Jazz Band, a top Washington, DC-based group that plays regularly for the Potomac River Jazz Club, and for Tri-State too. We are back in Wallingford for this year's concert! Pre-registration has closed, and the final set list and assignments will be circulated on June 20. In the meantime, walk-ins may be able to participate; check in with band-leader Dave Robinson when you arrive on concert day.

Rossano Sportiello – Piano

May 31, 2026, at the Wallingford Community Arts Center

Review by Jim McGann

The concert began with a short tribute to Fats Waller, introducing “Ain’t Misbehavin’.” Its first few bars of appeared to take on a different approach, as if performed sans Stride. As the chorus extended, there was even a quote from “Rhapsody In Blue.” Happily, in successive choruses, the performance returned to familiar stride territory. This defined the pianistic skills of Rossano Sportiello, who performed on Sunday. Tributes to many classic keyboardists took place during the concert, but all of them had a certain Sportiellian (?) character about them.

For example, following “Ain’t Misbehavin’”, was the ascending paced “Honeysuckle Rose.” As the choruses accelerated in tempo, Fats Waller’s signature pianistics were on display, but in the earlier slower choruses, Sportiello took an almost classical approach to a jazz standard that was originally introduced to the general public as background for a soft shoe dance number for a revue entitled **Load of Coal!** This is not an accident for as Sportiello admitted when discussing Teddy Wilson, has a classical background. Paul Whiteman was quoted as saying that he wanted “to make a lady out of jazz.” In Sportiello’s case, the “lady” is dressed to the nines.

Continuing with the first set, there were tributes to Earl Hines, the aforementioned Teddy Wilson, Erroll Garner, and Nat Cole. With Hines, Sportiello performed “Rosetta” and “You Can Depend On Me.” On both tunes, Sportiello emphasized the “trumpet style” attack – a hard pounding of the treble keys Hines innovated primarily to compete with the horns. Out of the two, I prefer “Rosetta” taken at a slower tempo, which fully expands Hines’ lovely melody. For Wilson, like the previous Waller, there was Sportiello in the slower tempi on “Darn That Dream” and “When You’re Smiling.” Same can be said for the tributes to Nat Cole and Erroll Garner, the latter’s composition, “Misty,” almost disguising the usual Garnerisms – locked chords and stride – and replacing them with some of the most beautiful bell chords applied to a jazz standard.

The set concluded with a tribute of Art Tatum, “Tea for Two.” No one could come close to duplicating Tatum’s genius skills at the piano. Sportiello does not attempt to replicate the master but acts as if cast in the role of Art Tatum. The actor Spencer Tracy described his approach to acting as putting himself in the role; the character might be the antithesis of the actor, but Tracy managed to put his personal stamp in acting out the part. Sportiello takes on a similar approach with Tatum, with abrupt shifts in tempo, treating the pop song in a classical manner by employing classical techniques.

The second set did not achieve the exciting levels of the first set but had its moments. “Yesterday,” taken from a Jerome Kern medley which included “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes,” “The Way You Look Tonight” and “The Song Is You,” had a very avant-garde illustration, with hard minor left hand punching accents. However, I felt that the Kern medley, and the following Harry Warren medley, although beautifully performed, tended to drag a bit. Things picked up with a bright performance of Willie “the Lion” Smith’s “Echoes of Spring,” along with a Schumann-Chopin medley, excitingly concluding with the Lion’s “test piece,” “Finger Buster.”

Rossano Sportiello with his classical background, and exquisite touch, convinced this reviewer, like Whiteman did over a hundred years ago, that jazz music can be developed into a classy phenomenon.



Tri-State did not live-stream or record Sunday's concert for the society's channel, but readers can visit Rossano's YouTube channel or website to see his series of "Live from the flat in Greenwich Village" recordings. His latest program (number 142! - his birthday recital, by the way) can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBdWuHz21PA> And explore his sites – <https://www.youtube.com/@RossanoSportielloMusic> or <https://rossanosportiello.com> – to see any of the many previous offerings.

Other Jazz Happenings



PENNSYLVANIA JAZZ SOCIETY presents

Coming in June –
Midiri Brothers Jazz Ensemble
Sunday, June 7, 2026
2 – 4:30 pm
Congregation Brith Sholom
1190 W. Macada Road
Bethlehem PA 18017

Admission: First Timers \$15, PJS Members \$15
Non-PJS Members \$20 – Students are always free
More Information: 347-247-5214

Visit the Society's website at
<https://www.pajazzsociety.org/>



Potomac River Jazz Club Zoom Jazz Talk:
Remembering the Manassas Jazz Festival
featuring **Dave Robinson**

David Robinson takes us down memory lane to the legendary Manassas Jazz Festival in a multimedia presentation. From 1966 to 1989, the annual Manassas Jazz Festival was a much-anticipated event among Washington-area jazz fans. Held in rural Manassas, Virginia, and produced by Johnson "Fat Cat" McRee (a founder of the Potomac River Jazz Club), the festival brought together swing-era stars and prominent local musicians to play traditional jazz and swing in unpredictable combinations.

Monday, June 15, 2026 – 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm EDT
The event is FREE! Though donations accepted to offset the cost of this series. This presentation will be held via Zoom and a link will be sent by e-mail the day of the presentation.
Please register by 5pm on the day of the event:

[Registration](#)

Or, go to the PRJC website at <https://prjc.org/>
for more information.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/prjc-zoom-jazztalk-remembering-the-manassas-jazz-festival-wdavid-robinson-tickets-1988271902784>

Concert Schedule

All Concerts on Sunday afternoon, 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm (unless otherwise noted)

6/14/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Larry Toft's Red Hot Ramblers</p> <p>The Red Hot Ramblers are an authentic 1920s jazz ensemble in every way. They exemplify red-hot syncopation, stompin' rhythms, and lyrical melodies associated with the Jazz Age. The repertoire can extend before and after the 1920s from the early years in Jazz, such as New Orleans Style and Ragtime, up to the swing era of the 1930s and 40s and even into the modern Second Line New Orleans parade style.</p>
7/12/2026 Wallingford	<p>The Tri-State All-Stars Jam</p> <p>The Tri-State All-Stars return! Our annual tradition offers a core band of top performers jamming together with guest musicians, on familiar trad jazz tunes. Guest musicians can pre-register, and even last-minute walk-ins may be accommodated, checking in the day of the concert.</p>
8/23/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Neville Dickie with Joe and Paul Midiri</p> <p>This Tri-State tradition continues! World-class British pianist Neville Dickie rejoins TSJS veterans Joe and Paul Midiri. Neville is among the most accomplished stride and boogie-woogie pianists on either side of the Atlantic. Joe and Paul Midiri, well-known to Tri-State audiences, have recorded with everything from trios to big bands.</p>
9/27/2026 Wallingford	<p>The Blackbird Society Orchestra</p> <p>The 11 to 12-piece Blackbird Society Orchestra has become one of Tri-State's favorites. The Tri-state area's Premier Authentic 1920's/1930's Jazz Band plays original arrangements of bands of the 1920s – 1930s.</p>
10/18/2026 Haddonfield	<p>Pete & Will Anderson with Adam Moezina</p> <p>Twin brothers Peter and Will Anderson have wowed TSJS audiences before with their reed mastery. This time they're bringing a friend – guitarist Adam Moezina – with whom they've played a series of concerts around New York and beyond.</p>
11/15/2026 Wallingford	<p>Kris Tokarski – Piano</p> <p>New Orleans pianist Kris Tokarski offers a solo performance that is sure to feature legendary NOLA composers like Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver.</p>

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SPECIAL MENTION — DONATIONS — High Value, Frequent Donations, Recurring Donations

Gary Coller
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Tri—State Jazz Society depends on the generous contributions of members because basic membership dues and concert admission charges do not cover all costs. The board asks members to consider renewing their memberships at the Sponsor, Patron, or Sustainer level if they are able to do so.

Features Now ONLINE on the
Tri-State Jazz Website

[Our Premium Level Members](#)

[Tri-State Jazz Society Board of Directors](#)

[Tri-State Jazz Society Contact Information](#)

[Online Membership Enrollment and Renewal](#)

[CONCERT SCHEDULE](#)

Sundays from 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Visit our [Tri-State Jazz Society website](#) for up-to-the-minute news about schedule and concert changes

Member admission is \$10; general admission is \$20.

Introductory offer — start a **new, first-time** TSJS annual membership (\$20) at the door and receive free admission to this concert (*not applicable to renewal or re-activation*)

Full-time students with ID, or children accompanied by a paying adult, are free.

ADA compliance — access to our concert venues is available at grade level.

Restroom facilities are available at grade level.

Elevator access is available for the HUMC auditorium level.

Restroom facilities are available at the HUMC auditorium level.



Tri—State Jazz Society, formed in 1988, is dedicated to the preservation and live performance of traditional jazz. Concerts featuring leading professional soloists and bands are presented throughout the year. Events are open to the public and all who enjoy traditional jazz are invited to join. The society is a non—profit educational corporation supported by its members.

Membership

Basic dues are \$20 per person. New and renewal memberships can be started in any month and run for one year. In addition to half—price concert admissions, members receive **The Strutter** newsletter by email.

Premium memberships help sustain and expand the work of Tri-State Jazz Society. Individual Sponsors contribute at the \$50 level (\$70 for couples); Patrons, \$100 (\$120 for couples); Sustainers \$200 or more (\$220 or more for couples). Premium level members are eligible to attend an annual reception for Sponsors, Patrons and Sustainers.

Visit our website for more details:

[New Member application](#)

[Renew your membership](#) at the Sustainer, Patron, or Sponsor level. Dues and donations may be tax deductible under IRS Section 501(c)(3).



Membership Form

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
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| Patron Dues: | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Couple \$120 |
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Amount Enclosed \$ _____ Date _____ Check No. _____

Members are admitted to all regular concerts at half price. Memberships renewed prior to expiration start at the end of current membership; expired memberships start on receipt of payment. All memberships run for 12 months.

First and Last Name(s) _____

Street _____

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Mail with check payable to Tri-State Jazz Society, Inc., P.O. Box 896, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

**TRI-STATE JAZZ SOCIETY, INC.
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