

SPRING 2025

kcck
jazz 88.3



rhythm & news

Top Albums of 2024

Student Profile: Lydia Kilgore

Staff Profile: Ron Adkins

Member Profile: Stella Hart

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

THE KEY OF G

As we get ready to celebrate KCCK's 50th birthday in 2025, I'm feeling some personal nostalgia as well, because 2024 was my 25th year at Iowa's Jazz Station. Anniversaries are a time to think back, and there are so many events and people that have made this job the highlight of my long broadcast career.



Dennis Green

I give Career Day talks to middle schoolers several times a year. Invariably, I'm asked what is my favorite thing about my job. Here's what I say:

"I've worked at a lot of radio stations in my career and occasionally had the No. 1 shift or station in the market. Now, KCCK will never be the No. 1 station in terms of audience, but what we do is *important*. In fact, KCCK is so crucial to our listeners that when we say they need

to help pay for the station with a contribution, *they actually do it*. People willingly pay for something they could get for free. To me, that makes this station an organization that transcends regular media."

What we do matters.

It matters to the hundreds of families who attend our events, like Jazz Under the Stars. It matters to the thousands of kids who benefit from our jazz education programs. And it matters to the listener, who gets to have a local, community jazz outlet in a world of software algorithms and mass-produced entertainment.

I'm grateful to my KCCK colleagues, to Kirkwood, and to the Eastern Iowa community for trusting me with this media gem for the last quarter century. It's not something any of us here take for granted. And we all work hard every day to be worthy of that trust and to make KCCK better.

So, happy work anniversary to me, but more importantly, Happy 50th Birthday to KCCK! 2025 will be a fun year to remember the past and celebrate a bright future for this unique station and the music we love.

Dennis Green
General Manager, KCCK

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C O N T E N T

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Jazz Education..... | 03 |
| Events..... | 06 |
| Staff Profile: Ron Adkins..... | 09 |
| KCCK's Top Albums for 2024 | 10 |
| Student Profile: Lydia Kilgore | 11 |
| Member Profile: Stella Hart..... | 12 |
| KCCK Donors | 13 |
| Memorial Gifts | 21 |
| Financial Summary | 22 |
| Sponsor Spotlight: The Olympic..... | 23 |

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CORRIDOR JAZZ PROJECT

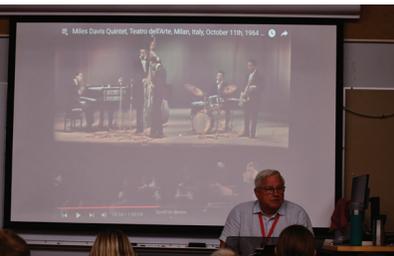
2024 was a big year for the Corridor Jazz Project! Independence and Williamsburg joined us for the first time, and the program is now so big we've had to divide the concert into two parts, with half the bands playing at the Paramount Theatre and the rest giving a show at the UI's Voxman Hall of Music. Students again shared favorite tunes and jazz band stories on the air during our guest DJ hours during April Jazz Appreciation Month.



Jazz Education

JAZZ BAND CAMP

Kirkwood's Cedar Hall rang with music in July as more than 70 students participated in KCCK's Middle School Jazz Band Camp for a week of learning and playing.



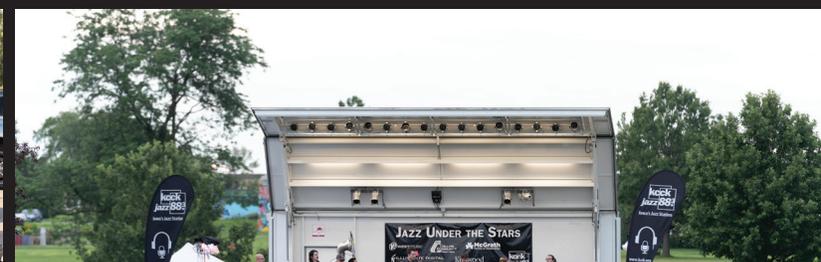
SCHOOLHOUSE JAZZ

KCCK's Schoolhouse Jazz and Blues in the Schools toured area elementaries in April and May. One highlight was a trip to Cedar County, where the band performed at Bennett Elementary.



JAZZ UNDER THE STARS

BYOBrass brought the heat to kick off Jazz Under the Stars 2024, and we didn't let up for the next four consecutive Thursdays, with outstanding sets from BYO, Funk Daddies, Group X, Trio Grismore, the Sam Ross Quintet, Next Gen Jazz Collective, the Murphy Fisher Quartet, and Ship of Fools.



IOWA CITY JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Iowa City Jazz Festival lit up Clinton Street again this year, highlighted by headline performances from Ingrid Jensen, Matt Wilson, and Lakecia Benjamin.



'DABLUESAPALOOZA

'daBluesapalooza sold out in 2024, and The Olympic South Side Theater was rocking all night long with sets from Funkatude, The Janeys, D-Dog and the BBiTs, Homebrewed, Tanya English, Matt Panek, and Dr. Z's Experiment.



TASTE OF JAZZ

Taste of Jazz is spring's biggest party! In addition to the outstanding food and decorations created by Kirkwood Hospitality Arts students and the lobby entertainment, the 250 guests in attendance heard from Kirkwood alum and interim Kirkwood Jazz director Blake Shaw before his students performed. And just when you thought the evening couldn't get any better, 10 of Soul returned to the Taste of Jazz stage to bring the evening to a rousing close! Taste of Jazz 2025 will be a truly legendary experience. Stay tuned for the announcement of our special guest, and save the date of April 25!



Staff Profile

Ron Adkins

RON GETS DOWN



Ron Adkins began his journey to KCCCK on a dirt road. “My first job was at a little farm station called KCIM in Carroll, Iowa,” he recalls. “It was literally in the middle of a cornfield. You had to take the highway out of town, then turn onto a gravel road and then a dirt path to get to it.”

But even though his hometown of Carroll was small, it was a great place to learn the broadcasting business. He was promoted to the company’s FM station, KKRL, while still in high school.

Coe College brought Ron to Cedar Rapids, but he continued to work at KKRL on breaks and during the summer. The station offered him a full-time job as music director when he graduated, and he immersed himself in learning programming and station operations. But he soon tired of the small-town life.

“I moved back to Cedar Rapids and got a job at

“We help listeners get through the day, satisfy their craving for jazz, and share music that speaks to their souls.”

1. A young Ron Adkins cuts up with co-workers at KKRL in Carroll, Iowa.
2. Ron records a student testimonial during The Corridor Jazz Project.

DeSoda’s nightclub, which at the time was one of the biggest clubs in Iowa. I was a DJ there, and then kind of moved up the ranks. I became an assistant manager of the club, and then was the corporate entertainment director.”

Eventually, he turned to retail, spending nearly 20 years at Barnes & Noble, which enabled the English major to engage his other passion: writing and literature. A published writer himself, he organized author readings and ran a successful writers group where he met fellow author Dennis Green.

Ron joined KCCCK when he filled in for “Gentle Jazz” host Bob Naujoks during a summer sabbatical in 2005. When Gordon Paulsen retired, he joined Iowa’s Jazz Station full time, where his afternoon show continues the tradition of ending the workday with what he calls “your daily dose of get down,” “Funk at Five.”

He continues to nurture his love of writing, too, inspired by mentors like National Book Award-winning poet Marc Doty. Ron has authored short stories, poetry, and even collaborated on creative projects blending literature and photography. He is the primary writer of KCCCK’s award-winning “Soundtrack to the Struggle.” And he’s currently working on “Axeman’s Jass,” a staged radio play based on a historical New Orleans serial killer.

Ron calls working at KCCCK his dream job. “This is the one I’ve always wanted – to do radio and make a difference,” he says. “We help listeners get through the day, satisfy their craving for jazz, and share music that speaks to their souls.”

KCCK's Top Albums for 2024

New Orleans legend Etienne Charles and sax master Chris Potter topped KCCK's airplay for the year, with Iowa's own Kevin Burt a close third. Visit www.kcck.org/news/top-88-for-2024 to see the full Top 88 chart.

1. Etienne Charles "Creole Orchestra" (Culture Shock)
2. Chris Potter "Eagle's Point" (Edition)
3. Kevin Burt & Big Medicine "Thank You Brother Bill" (Gulf Coast)
4. Michael Wolff "Memoir" (Sunnyside)
5. Planet D Nonet "Echoes of Harlem" (Eastlawn)
6. Monty Alexander "D-Day" (PeeWee)
7. Tierney Sutton & San Gabriel 7 "Good People" (JRL-SGS)
8. Warren Wolf "History of the Vibraphone" (Cellar)
9. Ben Allison, Steve Cardenas & Ted Nash "Tell the Birds I Said Hello" (Sonic Camera)
10. Parker/Gillespie/Powell/Mingus/Roach "Hot House: The Complete Jazz at Massey Hall Concert" (Craft)
11. Lizz Wright "Shadow" (Blues & Green)
12. Wolff, Clark & Dorsey "A Letter to Bill Evans" (Jazz Avenue 1)
13. Brian Melvin, Soren Lee & Mads Sondergaard "Tranesformation" (Storyville)
14. Ghost-Note "Mustard n' Onions" (Artistry/Mack Avenue)
15. Zaccai Curtis "Cubop Lives!" (Truth Revolution)
16. Catherine Russell & Sean Mason "My Ideal" (Dot Time)
17. Jeremy Pelt "Tomorrow's Another Day" (High Note)
18. Thom Rotella "Side Hustle" (High Note)
19. Terry Gibbs Dream Band "Vol. 7: The Lost Tapes, 1959" (Whaling City Sound)
20. Ken Peplowski "Live at Mezzrow" (Cellar)
21. Bria Skonberg "What It Means" (Cellar)
22. Daggerboard "Escapement" (Wide Hive)
23. Ethan Iverson "Technically Acceptable" (Blue Note)
24. Brian Landrus "Plays Ellington & Strayhorn" (Palmetto)
25. Betty Bryant "Lotta Livin'" (Bry-Mar)
26. Craig Erickson "Dream Tracks" (Craig Erickson)



Student Profile

Lydia Kilgore

LYDIA KILGORE TAKES A BOW



“Multitalented” doesn’t come close to describing Lydia Kilgore.

Just ask KCCCK General Manager Dennis Green: “She’s a triple threat. On the air, she’s friendly and relatable, with excellent music sense. But she’s also a standout musician herself. She plays multiple instruments, is an accomplished vocalist, and recently made her on-stage theatrical debut.”

Adding to her repertoire as a performer, Lydia is also a prolific songwriter. She’s debuted her original works onstage at Kirkwood and at other venues.

Lydia joined KCCCK as a summer intern in 2023. One of the requisites of an associate of applied arts degree is to complete a program related to one’s field

“I have a great love of jazz. I’m an old soul, I guess.”

1. Lydia preps in studio for her weekly KCCCK show.
2. Lydia made her onstage debut last fall in Kirkwood’s production of “Into The Woods.”

of study. For Lydia, it was music. She has performed with many Kirkwood ensembles but thought some time at KCCCK would be a good place to learn more.

KCCCK and Lydia have been an excellent fit. She has accepted every challenge we’ve offered her and done them all brilliantly. Lydia co-hosts KCCCK’s “Thursday Evening Jazz,” on the air from 8 to 10 p.m. Her music selection runs the gamut of classics, mainstream, and exciting cutting-edge pieces. Her love of all music is evident in what she plays, but, she confesses, “I have a great love of jazz. I’m an old soul, I guess.”

She recently added musical theatre to her resume with a standout performance in Kirkwood’s fall 2024 production of “Into the Woods.” Audiences not only heard the full range of her singing but enjoyed her natural comedic timing.

“Lydia has also mastered video and audio editing as the producer of ‘Culture Crawl,’” says Dennis Green. “We often have hundreds of people viewing ‘Culture Crawl’ videos online. Much of the credit for that goes to Lydia’s slick postproduction.” And, Lydia will forever be a part of ‘Culture Crawl’ since she is also the vocalist for the podcast’s theme music.

When her Kirkwood career ends, Lydia will study Music Therapy at the University of Iowa. She recently auditioned for the School of Music in hopes of performing in their ensembles as well. Then, it’s a master’s degree and setting up her practice. “I’m really passionate about the science behind musical therapy,” she says.

Lydia’s friends at KCCCK have been thrilled to be a part of the first movement of a prosperous life in music. We can’t wait to see what Lydia conquers next.

Donor Profile

Stella Hart

A CONSTANT PRESENCE

Stella Hart could discern between tenor sax players when she was 2 years old. Whenever John Coltrane came on KCCK, she'd turn to her brother Roland and exclaim, "Baby, that's Trane!"

The daughter of first-call Iowa saxophonists Peter and Lynne Hart, Stella says KCCK has been a reliable presence in her life for as long as she can remember. "KCCK was on constantly whenever we were driving somewhere," she recalls. "My earliest memories involve attending Jazz Under the Stars concerts at Noelridge Park, where my parents would play in one of their bands. It was magical to be part of those moments."

Stella's personal connection to KCCK grew as she did. In high school, she participated in the very first years of the Corridor Jazz Project. The summer before college, she joined us as an intern and a counselor at Middle School

Jazz Band Camp. Today, she has her own music career, highlighted by a performance for KCCK with the Iowa Women's Jazz Orchestra. "I think it was probably the highlight of my life performing at Jazz Under the Stars," she says.

"I realized how much I value what KCCK provides – not just for me, but for my family and the entire community."

And she's come full circle in another way, too. When she drives her own 2 year old around Iowa City, the soundtrack to their car rides is still Iowa's Jazz Station. In fact, it was sharing her love of jazz with her son that encouraged her to join her parents and become a second-generation KCCK member and donor.

"We'd sing along and groove in the car," she says. "I realized how much I value what KCCK provides – not just for me, but for my family and the entire community."

Stella supports KCCK because she knows her contributions help sustain a menu of programming and education that's unmatched anywhere else. "I think about the camps, the Corridor Jazz Project, and the incredible live recordings from events like the Iowa City Jazz Festival. These experiences are irreplaceable. Supporting KCCK ensures they continue for future generations."

In addition to the value she places on KCCK's community programs, Stella also values the human touch the station provides. "Algorithmic playlists can't replicate the emotional resonance of human-curated content," she says. "KCCK offers a connection to the community, to the artists, and to the stories behind the music. It's deeply personal and profoundly impactful."

In a world where music listening is dominated by services like Spotify and YouTube, Stella thinks KCCK is more important than ever. "In a time when so many people feel isolated, KCCK creates connection," she explains. "It's a lifeline for discovering new music, engaging with local culture, and feeling part of something bigger."

From her earliest memories to her current roles as an artist, listener, and donor, KCCK has been a constant presence in Stella's life. "KCCK brings people together through music," she says. "It's a treasure for our community, and I'm grateful to be part of its story."



Stella Hart performed with the Iowa Women's Jazz Orchestra at Jazz Under the Stars in 2022.

KCKK 2024 Donors

The following list reflects charitable gifts given to KCKK between Jan. 1, 2024, and Dec. 31, 2024. While every effort has been made to ensure that this report is accurate, we apologize in advance if we failed to list your name properly.

If you believe your listing is in error, or you do not wish your name to be printed in future reports, please contact the KCKK office at 319-398-5446.

Sustaining Members are highlighted in bold type. These music fans have made the special commitment to make a pledge to KCKK that automatically renews every year.

The guaranteed, consistent giving gives us the ability to better budget and plan for the long term.

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Memorial Gifts

Thank you to the family and friends of Dwayne Augspurger, Steve Reist, and Allen Taylor who contributed memorial gifts in their names in 2024.

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2024 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Operating Revenues

| | |
|--|--|
| CPB, Community Service Grants | Jazz Band Camp |
| \$163,679 | \$13,600 |
| Contributions from individuals through Kirkwood Community College Foundation | Contributions from business and industry through Kirkwood Community College Foundation |
| \$290,751 | \$49,422 |

Nonoperating Revenues

| |
|--|
| Investment Earnings (loss) |
| \$85,281 |
| State Board and Iowa Department of Education allocations |
| \$545,589 |
| Administrative support from Kirkwood Community College |
| \$239,708 |

Expenses

| |
|--|
| Programming and Production |
| \$516,160 |
| Broadcast and Engineering |
| \$15,681 |
| Programming Information and Promotion |
| \$21,468 |
| Management and General |
| \$513,441 |
| Fundraising and Membership Development |
| \$124,681 |
| Underwriting and Grant Solicitation |
| \$21,039 |
| Jazz Camp |
| \$10,219 |
| Depreciation |
| \$8,230 |

KCCK's financial audits for this and previous years can be viewed at www.kcck.org/legal or in person during business hours at the KCCK office.

TOTAL REVENUE
\$1,388,030

TOTAL EXPENSES
\$1,230,919

CHANGES IN NET POSITION
\$157,111



Sponsor Spotlight

The Olympic South Side Theater

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

In addition to hosting 'daBluesapalooza, the Olympic Theater served as a backup site for Jazz Under the Stars in 2023 when the temperature soared past 100 degrees.

The Olympic South Side Theater in Cedar Rapids is a historic treasure located in the city's New Bohemia District. More than a venue, it's a space where the community can come together.

The 1908 building began as a social hub for the Czech community and was built for the fraternal life association Zápvní Česko Bratrská Jednota (ZCJ), which translates to Western Bohemian Fraternal Association. The association provided insurance and financial security for Czech immigrants. Members created lodges in their areas to celebrate ethnic traditions, speak their native language, and produce artistic performances and cultural events.

Through the years the ZCJ building has been a number of social halls, clubs, and venues. Most recently, the building housed a performance venue called 3rd Street Live, which was shuttered in 2014 when the first floor's Chrome Horse restaurant suffered a fire. The upstairs hall was closed for five years, but owner and entrepreneur Steve Shriver had a vision for the space.

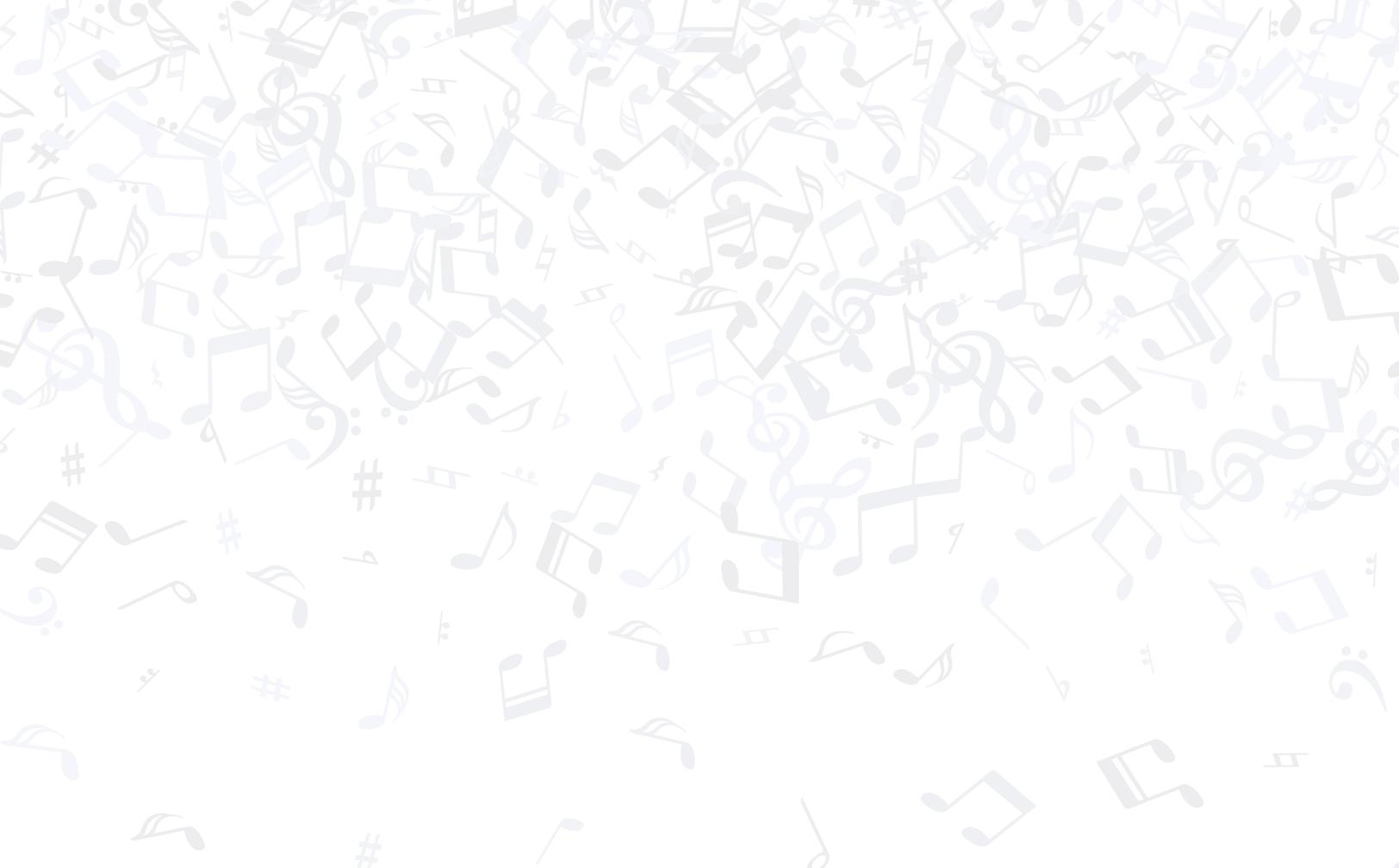
In 2019, The Olympic South Side Theater was announced, taking its name from a 1912 theater that showed silent movies and Czech films.

The Olympic celebrates the area's rich immigrant legacy by continuing a spirit of togetherness. It's a hub for diverse events, including live music, weddings, fundraisers – even a silent disco! Featuring a large stage and seating for up to 300 or standing room for up to 500, The Olympic can accommodate large, loud shows or small, intimate performances. The venue hosts over 100 corporate and community events during the year.

“The Olympic can serve nearly any part of your journey, from first dates to weddings, baby showers, and anniversaries,” says venue manager Brandi Sawyer. She says what sets The Olympic apart from other area venues is how versatile the space is. “If there is a vision you have for your event, we want to make it happen.”

The Olympic is also a generous host for nonprofits, hosting fundraising events and galas, including KCCK's annual 'daBluesapalooza, which began as a one-off event to celebrate 35 years of 'da Blues on KCCK and has since turned into an annual concert and all-star jam. The Olympic team even offered to host KCCK's Jazz Under The Stars in 2023 when a rare 102-degree heat warning threatened to cancel the show!

Looking ahead to 2025, the Olympic has a renewed focus on growing creative, new, and inclusive events, making the historic venue a destination for all.



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