

Bob Masteller

November 20, 1938 - March 10, 2015

The youngest of five children in a musical family, jazz enthusiast Bob Masteller left a legacy of kindness, vision and love.

His father, Harold F. Masteller, an arranger and composer, was classically trained and passionate about music. He played hot fiddle violin and was one of the first vibraphone players in America. Following in his father's footsteps, Bob first picked up an instrument at age 12 and he was 13 when he performed for the first time, playing with his father's band in the swinging age of Big Bands.



Photo credit: www.photographybyanne.com

Although he was musically inclined from an early age, Bob's first dream was to become a Major League baseball player—only to discover he wasn't as fast as he thought he was. During a storied business career, the love of jazz music never left him and Masteller was never far from the show, playing a trumpet, a valve trombone or big-bellied fluegelhorn.

Masteller came to Hilton Head Island in 1973 to be a Vice President of Human Resources at Sea Pines Plantation Co. He later got into property management and the resort consulting businesses, but his dream to open a jazz club was always there.

In 1999, with the support of his wife Lois, Masteller followed his dream and The Jazz Corner was born. Bob wanted to help preserve the great American art form of jazz, and in the process he nurtured countless musicians and individuals young and old with his passion for music. With a combination of extraordinary local talent and international stars, The Jazz Corner earned a world wide reputation for quality, playing sold out shows seven nights a week.

Masteller was involved in the community in countless ways such as serving on the board of advisers for Hilton Head Hospital and heading its committee to add an obstetrics unit. In 2014, he received the Alice Glenn Doughtie good citizen award for his service to the community. He also headed the Beaufort County Democratic Party.

Whether Masteller was introducing the next act, playing a set with one of the musicians, or telling the audience about the summer jazz program for kids or the Junior Jazz Foundation, which was created to promote music in the schools and keep it alive for another generation—he was living his dream at The Jazz Corner.

This giant of jazz will be greatly missed.

"He was the embodiment of kindness and giving to others. That is truly worth being remembered for."

-Tom Webster, Hilton Head Island