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Dr. Thomas Heflin and Ron Westray of The Ron Westray-Thomas Heflin Quintet

Ron Westray-Thomas Heflin Quintet, Jazz Festival April 16 at ABAC

TIFTON – Internationally acclaimed trombonist Ron Westray will join jazz trumpet artist Thomas Heflin for a dynamic performance at 7 p.m. on April 16 of The Ron Westray-Thomas Heflin Quintet in the final show of this season’s performing arts series at Abraham
Baldwin Agricultural College. A Jazz Clinic will be held at 4 p.m. in Howard Auditorium prior to the performance.

A limited number of tickets priced at $15 each for adults and $10 each for students are available for the Westray-Heflin performance by calling (229) 391-4895 or by visiting www.purplepass.com/abac.

Heflin currently serves as the director of the ABAC jazz band and as assistant professor of jazz in the School of Liberal Arts at ABAC. In 2005, he placed second in the Carmine Caruso International Jazz Trumpet Solo Competition in Seattle, Wash. He has released three albums as a leader on Blue Canoe Records, the last of which was a collaborative CD with Westray.

In addition to a former position as brass instructor at Roane State Community College, Heflin has served as the Central Greenough Artist-in-Residence in Western Australia and as an artist-in-residence with the Always on Stage Festival in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada. In 2009, he received his doctorate in Music Performance from the University of Texas. Shortly after, he moved to New York City and served as Program Manager and on the jazz faculty at the Manhattan School of Music Precollege Division for five years.

Westray, who will be featured with the ABAC jazz band during the evening, is well-known as one of the most highly regarded trombonists of his generation. He was the lead trombonist with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. In 2009, Westray and Heflin released an album together, “Live from Austin,” a live recording from the Elephant Room in Austin, Tex.

The ABAC jazz band has performed throughout the Southeastern United States, Mexico and Europe including performances at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland, the North Sea
Jazz Festival in Amsterdam and two World Fairs. The band also performed at the opening of the Olympic Games in Atlanta. The musicians have also been featured in theme parks such as Disney World, EPCOT Center, Sea World, and Six Flags over Georgia.

The Westray-Heflin performance in Howard Auditorium serves as the icing on the cake for the day-long ABAC Jazz Festival, which will feature 13 high school jazz bands from across the state beginning at 10 a.m. on the ABAC campus.

The high school jazz band performances on The Meadows are open to the public at no charge. Visitors can bring their own lunch or just come and listen to the music. In the event of rain, the Jazz Festival will take place in Howard Auditorium.

Americus Sumter County South kicks off the day at 10 a.m. followed by Southeast Bulloch at 10:22 a.m., Worth County at 10:44 a.m., Colquitt County at 11:06 a.m., Ware County at 11:28 a.m., Valdosta at 11:50 a.m., Lee County at 12:12 p.m., Thomas County Central at 12:34 p.m., Crisp County at 12:56 p.m., Lanier County at 1:18 p.m., Hampton at 1:40 p.m., Riverdale at 2:02 p.m., Appling County at 2:24 p.m., and the ABAC Jazz Choir at 3 p.m.

Sponsored by the School of Liberal Arts, the Jazz Festival promotes jazz and jazz education in South Georgia. For additional information on this event, interested persons can call the ABAC music program office at (229) 391-4945.