

**Preconcert both days one hour prior to the concert**

## **Ocala Latin Jazz**

Ocala Latin Jazz is a group that plays Latin Jazz music. The group was formed by Rodney Rodriguez one of our trombone players. It is a bit different than standard American jazz since it requires the addition of Latin percussion such as congas and timbales. Latin Jazz was founded by the legendary percussionist Tito Puente (RIP) from his idea of converting American Standard Jazz into Latin Jazz by giving it a bit more flavor.

The group started practicing together in the beginning of November, but Rodney has had this style band with other musicians from other countries for many years at many U.S. Embassies around the globe. He stopped playing when he retired from the U.S. Foreign Service in 2017, but he was approached by Matt Veselsky, also one of our band members about playing Latin Jazz.

The group has seven musicians. Rodney Rodriguez on Trombone, Manuel Esis on Trumpet from our band, Matt Veselsky Tenor Sax, Mike Holt from our band on Alto Sax, Joe Nucio on Piano, Frankie Gonzalez on Bass & Carlos Esquilin on Congas