



IN THE MOOD

The Olney Big Band
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2008

Volume 3, Number 5

Dear Readers:

We want to thank all of you for joining us this year in our celebration of Big Band music. Here is a sampling of the concerts we swung in 2008:

- Benny Goodman Commemoration
- Valentine's Brunch
- Library Lover's Month
- Battle of the Big Bands
- Annual Swing Dance
- Strawberry Festival
- Summer Jazz Series
- Alumni Weekend
- Montreux Jazz Festival
- Sounds of Summer
- A Mid-Summer Nights Swing
- Riderwood Concert
- Brooke Grove Concert
- American Cancer Society
- Big Band Celebration
- National Concert Party

WHEW!!!



www.olneybigband.org

Quarter Notes Musings Of A Band Leader

Dr. Rip G. Rice - Music Director, Olney Big Band

Jewish Influences On Blues, Jazz and Big Band Music

Every so often, an article from the internet comes around listing the positive influences of Jewish people over the last 100 years. Recently, the band has performed a number of songs that celebrate some of these Jewish influences. So, the roots of this article began forming and I was off to Google to add to the list.

In The Blues Blogger, I found an interesting article by Eric Olsen. Olsen, whose grandparents were orthodox Jews, writes, "Out of all the blues and jazz that I remember, how many of these were Jewish?, Is it even possible? I mean the roots of blues originated in the late 19th century in the American south by African-American slaves forced to work from sunup to sundown. Hmmm .. Sunup to Sundown ... Sunrise, Sunset ..." Hmmm!....

Olsen continues, "These slaves sang a rhythmic "call and response" to ease their brutal labor and to converse without knowledge of their masters. They were known as field hollers. One of the workers would shout a solo line, and then the others would repeat a harmony line, all the while being in tempo with the work at hand. These are the seeds of the blues, and the improvisational style of early jazz would form from this as well."

About the same time, something interesting was developing in Europe. At the end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th, many of the Jewish people lived in The Pale of Settlement. This included the territory of present-day Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus. The Jewish people from these Eastern European parts borrowed and synthesized music from different cultures, including styles with North Africa. When this Jewish culture started arriving as a whole in America's northern cities, they brought with them a style of music called the "Klezmer," a word created when combining the words vessel and song together.

African Americans, who were escaping the poverty of America's south, headed for a new beginning in the great cities of the industrial north. They brought the blues with them and started to form a new lifestyle away from oppression. In the formation of the blues, vocalists developed a style that was familiar, but at the same time not heard of before. During this time, horn and string players studied these blues singers, imitated their techniques and altered the sound to their own instrumental accompaniment. W.C. Handy was one of these horn players and would eventually be known as the Father of the Blues.

Jewish people and African Americans lived together in the big cities of New York, Boston, and Chicago and shared similar impoverished roots. They also shared their experiences, music and culture. One person in particular that best linked the two cultures was Al Jolson. Born Asa Jolson, the son of a Jewish Rabbi, Jolson's The Jazz Singer was the first movie to use sound as dialogue. The movie is a creation of Jewish imagination and it tells the



continued on page 2

story of a dream and new found ambition in America that conflicts with old world values. Musically it's a mix of Jazz and Yiddish Blues by way of Tin Pan Alley.

The contributions of many Jewish performers would continue to influence the blues and Jazz scene. The significant clout of artists like Artie Shaw (born Arturo Arshawski), Buddy Rich, Mel Tormé, Herbie Mann, Stan Getz, and Irving Berlin, to name a few, are immeasurable. These were Jewish people with their roots in the synagogue.

Many believe that George and Ira Gershwin were strongly influenced by their Yiddish backgrounds. The beginning clarinet of "Rhapsody in Blue" definitely has a Klezmer influence. The Olney Big Band's Sound Engineer and Properties Manager, Paul Freirich, sums up his thoughts with this observation about the Gershwin brothers – "George and Ira Gershwin had a genetic problem. They were genetically incapable of writing a bad song!" Amen to that!

Benny Goodman also displayed the Klezmer influence in much of his music. Ziggy Elman (born Harry Finckelman) played trumpet for the Goodman and Tommy Dorsey bands. He wrote considerable Klezmer music for both. Some of his many Klezmer hits include "Harry's Bulgar", "And The Angels Sing", plus a rework of a then little known song by two Jewish songwriters "Bei Mir Bist du Schön" (For a full history of Bei Mir Bist du Schön, see In The Mood, Sept. 2008 issue, page 5). Bei Mir was arranged just in time to be featured in Benny Goodman's famous concert at Carnegie Hall in January, 1938.

Without any doubt, Jewish musicians, song writers and arrangers have had remarkable influences on the development of blues, jazz, and Big Band Music. Thank you Lord, for such talented people. □

Joe the Dancer

by RIP RICE

Over the years, the Olney Big Band has developed a number of loyal groupies. Some like to come listen to us, others like to come dance to our music, and some like to do both. Joe Karam and his lovely and personable wife Dolores are two in the "let's do both" category.

Joe Karam died suddenly on August 27, 2008 – a real shock to all in the band. At most of our open-to-the-public venues, as we entered the hall, there were Joe and Dolores, waiting for the music to start. And rather than just saying "Hello" or "Gimmie five!", Joe would always say, "Don't forget to play My Buddy!" He simply loved dancing to this very special Ben Grisafi arrangement. This request never bothered us, because we love playing My Buddy, and liked to watch the two Karams twirl around the floor to this number.

On June 9 of this year, we played a concert at the Sandy Spring Museum. As we made our way to the bandstand, Joe called out, "You ARE going to play My Buddy tonight, aren't you?" "Yes", we replied, "but we've got another one you may like almost as well. Let us know." And we opened with There Will Never Be Another You, another Ben Grisafi arrangement that goes at about the same tempo as My Buddy. We were working up this chart especially to play at Montreux, and Joe and Dolores hadn't heard it.

As the applause was subsiding, Joe called out, "That's a keeper!" Later on in the second set, we played My Buddy. Afterwards, Joe came up and thanked us for playing these two Grisafi masterpieces. "Now I can't decide which is best", he said.

Joe was a member of the Elks Club in Northern Virginia. During the Spring of 2008, Joe personally saw to it that the Olney Big Band was booked into his Elks Club for a Valentine's



Joe and Dolores cut the rug at the Firehouse in Sandy Spring, MD
Photo by Anne Calamuci

Day (2009) dance, and again for a Christmas Dance in December (2009). The man was always "looking out for us". What a guy!

This band will always remember Joe Karam -- for his smile, his warm personality, his dancing, and for his joy of living and of loving big band music. We will never play My Buddy again, without dedicating it to his memory. Below are some details of Joe's life, submitted by Dolores. In The Mood is proud to publish this brief synopsis of Joe Karam's life, along with a photo of Joe and Dolores.

Joe grew up in McKees Rocks, PA, where he was the drum major for the high school band. While in the Army (1952-1954), he was also the drum major for the military band. Joe had two collections; one being 15 harmonicas which he played; the other his collection of dancing shoes. He put a lot of good steps in those shoes!

Joe met his wife Dolores at a dance in 1952. They have four great children, and really hit the dance scene in DC, Baltimore and Pennsylvania after the children had grown up. Never having a dance lesson, they had

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

a style all their own. Besides dancing twice a week, they did a lot of fund raisers in the area. One band named them "the recycled teenagers!"

The Olney Big Band was the last band he danced to (on July 31, 2008, just after the band had returned from the Montreux Jazz Festival), and the song was, of course, "My Buddy".

Joe Karam passed away suddenly on August 27, 2008 while at his computer, doing what he loved -- a big band web site was on his monitor screen. His motto was, "Let's dance!" He was 79.

From everyone in the Olney Big Band, "Goodbye Joe. Goodbye our Buddy! Book us into that Big Band Dance Hall in Heaven. We'll be with you someday." □



Joe and Delores, the "recycled teenagers"
Photo provided by Delores Karam

Jo Elizabeth Stafford

by BOB REDDING

Jo Elizabeth Stafford was considered one of the most versatile vocalists of the era. She was greatly admired for the purity of her voice and was also viewed as a pioneer of modern musical parody.

Jo was born on November 12, 1917, in Coalinga, California. At school, Jo spent five years in classical music training, expecting to become an opera singer. However, with her three pretty sisters, she formed a madrigal singing group that appeared on local radio five nights a week. Her group combined with another at the station to form the eight-voice Pied Pipers. One of the new singers was Paul Weston, a trumpet player who worked for Tommy Dorsey.

With Weston's connection to Dorsey as inspiration, the Pied Pipers drove across the continent to New York expecting an audition for the Dorsey radio show. After six months they gave up and returned to the West Coast. On receipt of her first welfare check, Jo received a message to call Chicago. It was Tommy Dorsey who asked for a quartet. The abbreviated Pied Pipers left for Chicago in December 1939 to join Dorsey, just as Frank Sinatra arrived to sing with the band.

The first song on which the Pipers appeared with Sinatra was the # 1 hit, "I'll Never Smile Again." The band was also featured in a few movies, and by March 1942, Sinatra had gone solo. At this point, the songwriter, Johnny Mercer, wanted to start a record company, Capitol, on the West Coast, and hired Jo Stafford, Peggy Lee and Margaret Whiting as his vocalists.

For the next ten years, Jo had 38 songs in the Top Twenty, among them "The Trolley Song" and "My Darling." She decided to stay in California where she continued to broadcast The Chesterfield Supper Club. She also made regular appearances on the Voice of America radio station.

When Paul Weston left for Columbia Records in the early 1950s, she followed



Provided by relativesoterica.blogspot.com

him, and they were married in 1952.

She developed theme LPs and continued to have such hits as "You Belong to Me." She sold 25 million discs for Columbia and made more than 600 recordings.

Stafford briefly experimented with comedy under the name "Cinderella G. Stump" and recorded a mock hillbilly version of Temptation, which she pronounced "Tim-tayshun." Her true success in the comedy genre came in the 1950s when Stafford and her husband turned a party skit, used to entertain guests, into a comedy hit. Their assumed identities of Jonathan and Darlene Edwards, a bad lounge act, eventually lead to several albums and a 1961 Grammy Award for Best Comedy Album. Their "party skit" produced the first commercially successful musical parody album, laying the groundwork for the careers of later musical parodists such as Weird Al Yankovic.

Paul Weston died in 1996. Jo, aged 90, died on July 23, 2008. She left behind one of the most pure, wide-ranging voices and careers in American popular song. □

Neal Hefti - Jazz Composer

by MATT SCHUDEL - Published: October 15, 2008

Neal Hefti, whose brilliance as a jazz composer and arranger for Count Basie, Frank Sinatra and other entertainers, died Oct. 11 at his home in Toluca Lake, Calif.

Starting in the 1940s, Mr. Hefti built his reputation behind the scenes while working for some of the most renowned musicians of the era, including bandleader Woody Herman, trumpeter Harry James, saxophonist Coleman Hawkins and drummer Buddy Rich.

A modestly talented trumpeter, he also led groups with his wife, singer Frances Wayne, but gained his greatest prominence as a composer and arranger for Basie and Sinatra in the 1950s and 1960s.

Later generations who knew nothing of his accomplishments in jazz recognize Mr. Hefti's music from his film and television themes.

In 1968, he composed the bouncy "Odd Couple Theme" for the movie version of the Neil Simon play that starred Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau.

He painstakingly composed the theme music for the "Batman" TV series shortly before the show's premiere in January 1966. After discarding many ideas, Mr. Hefti wrote the theme as a series of repeated two-note bursts, built on a framework of the 12-bar blues.

Mr. Hefti had to sneak in through the kitchen to hear the new jazz of bebop being developed by Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

Neal Paul Hefti was born Oct. 29, 1922, in Hastings, Neb., and grew up in Omaha. His family lived in poverty, with "dirt floors and three to four kids in a bed," his son said.



Jazz composer and arranger Neal Hefti, left, is shown in 1961 with Frank Sinatra, for whom he arranged music.
Photo courtesy of Paul Hefti

Neal Hefti began playing the trumpet at 11 and showed an early talent for writing arrangements. After graduating from high school in 1941, he joined a touring band but was fired for his poor sight-reading skills. He found himself stranded in New York, his son said, "with a trumpet and five bucks."

He worked with Charlie Barnet's progressive band in 1942 and frequented clubs on 52nd Street, where the penniless Mr. Hefti had to sneak in through the kitchen to hear the new jazz language of bebop being developed by Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

In 1944, Mr. Hefti signed on as a trumpeter and arranger with Herman. His compositions "Wild Root," "The Good Earth" and "Apple Honey" were instant sensations, and he wrote fresh arrangements of such Herman standards as "Woodchopper's Ball" and "Blowin' Up a Storm," plus a popular arrangement of "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe" for the band's singer, Frances Wayne.

In 1945, while the band was passing through Wayne's hometown of Somerville, Mass., she and Mr. Hefti were married. He had to borrow a suit from Herman because he didn't have one of his own.

The newlyweds quit the band in 1946 and went on the road together between Mr. Hefti's jobs as a freelance arranger in New York for radio and television shows and various musicians.

Among those impressed by his fresh, seemingly simple arrangements was Basie, who was rebuilding his band in the early 1950s and hired Mr. Hefti to arrange occasional tunes. By 1956, the young arranger had given the band a richer, distinctive new sound in the studio by placing a microphone with each musician and putting extra mikes around the drums and bass for added depth.

continued on page 5

continued from page 4

Mr. Hefti wrote all 11 of the tunes on the 1957 album now known as "Atomic Basie," including "Li'l Darlin'," "Splanky," "Kid From Red Bank," "Whirlybird" and "Midnite Blue."

The disc, with its catchy melodies and sinuous, behind-the-beat rhythms, is considered a jazz masterpiece.

The 1958 album, "Basie Plays Hefti," featured another of Mr. Hefti's big-band classics, "Cute." In 1962, Mr. Hefti wrote the arrangements for two well-received recordings with Frank Sinatra, "Sinatra-Basie" and "Sinatra and Swingin' Brass." In the early 1960s, he also composed the slinky hit "Girl Talk" with Bobby Troup.

By 1964, Mr. Hefti was working mostly in television and film and composed the scores for the movies "Sex and the Single Girl" (1964), "How to Murder Your Wife" (1965) and "Barefoot in the Park" (1967).

He did occasional work for Judy Garland, Tony Bennett and other singers and attempted to resurrect a big band before abruptly retiring in 1976 to live off his royalties.

"He never wrote another melody, not one," his son said. "He didn't want to write for anyone but himself and Frances." □

A tremendous loss to fine jazz. I don't think he could quite comprehend what a major influence he had on jazz music and how much his name still means to fans of his writing.

A very very sad loss. The Foo Birds are permanently grounded. Great composer/ Great arranger.

Jeff Flaggg

The OBB early on played one of Hefti's greatest charts "Coral Reef". Recently, we have added two others, "Cute" and Li'l Darlin'. We're targeting some day to have "Teddy the Toad" in our library. All 4 are Basie classics, and all written and arranged by Neil Hefti.

Rip Rice

Noteable Treasures

by ROBERT REDDING

The Airmen of Note is the premier jazz ensemble of the United States Air Force. Originally created in 1950 to carry on the tradition of Glenn Miller's Army Air Corps dance band, the Airmen of Note endures as one of the few touring big bands in the world today. With 18 of the finest musicians in the country, the Note has earned an international reputation as one of the premiere and most versatile bands of its kind.

The Airmen of Note's commitment to musical excellence has led to many collaborative efforts, recordings and performances with such luminaries as Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughn, and Cleo Laine. In 1990, the Note established its highly acclaimed Jazz Heritage Series. Since then, legendary jazz icons like Clark Terry and Louis Bellson have shared the stage with the Note as it presents the Heritage Series to Washington, D.C. audiences in the Lisner Auditorium.

The Note is also a leading force in music education. Many of its members routinely lead clinics at high schools and colleges across the nation, and are frequently invited to perform at national music conventions.

Another sign of the Note's commitment to music education is the Sammy Nestico Award. Initiated in 1994, it was named after Sammy Nestico who in 1954 was named the leader of the Note. The objective of this annual competition is to encourage young jazz composers, age 35 years or younger, who write in the big band idiom. The award winner travels to Washington, D.C. for the performance of his or her composition by the Airmen of Note during the Jazz Heritage Series. A year ago, the winner was Christopher Schmitz an Assistant Professor of Music at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas.

The Airmen of Note's members have continued to influence the world of jazz long after their service has ended. Sam-



Sammy Nestico
Photo courtesy of photobucket.com

my Nestico, for example, has been a leading arranger and composer for film, television and radio for over 50 years. Following his military career, which included a position as Director of the White House Orchestra, he worked for 14 years as a composer/arranger for the Count Basie Orchestra. He has written for hundreds of major artists of stage and screen and produced 63 albums for Capitol Records.

The Olney Big Band includes the following 11 Sammy Nestico charts in its repertoire: "Satin Doll", "C.B. Express", "Hay Burner", "Alright, OK You Win", "Basie Straight Ahead", "How Sweet It Is", "Moten Swing", "Shiny Stockings", "Sweet Georgia Brown", "Fly Me To The Moon", and "Carefree".

John Tegler, another Note alum, spent more than 13 years as a drummer with many name bands and jazz combos, including those of Elliot Lawrence, Tex Beneke, Claude Thornhill, and Count Basie.

Now more known as a broadcaster, writer and producer of jazz concerts, he is the regular host for Airmen of Note concerts at the Lisner Auditorium in Washington, D.C.

John is also the proud father of son, Brooks Tegler, a jazz band leader for 30 years playing all over the world. Brooks currently plays drums every Sunday evening in the Irish Inn at Glen Echo, Maryland.

The 63rd NTA Reunion Banquet & Dance

by pfc RIP RICE, 329th Engineers, Headquarters & Services Company, 104th Infantry Division Director, Olney Big Band

Dear fellow Timberwolves - pups, pupettes, grand pups/pupettes, etc.:

It was a great privilege for my Olney Big Band to play for your dancing and listening pleasure at the 63rd Annual Timberwolf Reunion in Washington, DC. Most of the folks in this band (those of you with web-capabilities, see www.olneybigband.org) are younger than us Timberwolves. Yet when I asked if they might be interested in playing for this event on a pro bono basis, the responses were unanimous and enthusiastic. "Absolutely! This is OUR chance to thank these veterans for keeping our country free!"

"This is OUR chance to thank these veterans for keeping our country free!"

And so, this band of part-time musicians, drawn from a diversity of non-musical professional interests, who come together simply to play the music they love, the music of the 1930s, '40s and early '50s, the music of the Big Band Era, the music that WE grew up with, and barely four years old, this band played for your entertainment after the Saturday night banquet. Those of you who were there enjoyed our stuff. We could tell.

Musicians know quickly whether audiences like what they are hearing or not. Every time a band starts playing, there are questions in the musicians' minds. Questions about acoustics, about playing at the proper volume, about whether the audience likes our selections. At this point, most musicians are a little nervous - wanting to be liked, but

concerned that might not be the case.

But when an audience responds, and as quickly as did the Timberwolves, with enthusiastic applause, and so many up and dancing, well - the band relaxes, smiles, takes deep breaths, relaxes, and plays - usually even better than when they started.

So Timberwolves who were there - thank YOU for allowing us to contribute to your entertainment. And to the Timberwolves that were not there - boy - did you miss a good show.

What/where is Olney? It is a small town (population ca 32,000) about 30 miles due north of Washington, DC. Some of the Big Band live in Olney, most live within a 20-minute drive, but several need over an hour to get to rehearsals. The day of the Banquet, some of our folks were at the hotel about 3:00 pm setting up our stands, lights, sound system, and all the trappings.

We had been advised to play from 8:30 pm to 11:00 or 11:30. We started with a 45-minute set, took a break, played a second set, and it was now 10:20 pm. Time for another break, usually. But I asked the audience what was their pleasure. The response - in a phrase - "If music be the food of love - play on!" From the Band to me - "Play on!! No break!! We love it!!" And so we did, until the hotel management moved in to shut us down at 11:30 pm.

At that point, the hotel management told me - "We have never seen a group of elderly people stay through 3 hours of ANYthing! That's why we told our staff they could go home at 11:30. Had we known, we could have pre-arranged to keep staff at their posts for as long as your audience wanted to stay! We're sorry - we just didn't



Provided by www.104infdiv.org

know you would be THIS good."

But enough bragging on how good an audience you were and how good a band we were. As I was developing the Play List - primarily of songs that were popular when we Timberwolves were young and going into combat together - it occurred to me that the titles of many of the numbers we were planning to play reminded me of events that we Timberwolves had experienced, some not much to our liking. So I developed some notes on these "Timberwolf-related WW-II experiences" song titles, and was prepared to talk about these numbers as we introduced each.

However, the best laid plans of mice and men (and musicians) "gang aft a-glee" as Bobby Burns once wrote. The band was set up in an out-of-the-way alcove, and not many of the banquet attendees could possibly hear what I had been planning to say. So my "schtick" was set aside. If you don't mind, however, I'd like to include here what I was going to say about certain numbers we played.

continued on page 7

continued from page 6

AMERICAN PATROL

(Glenn Miller version)

Very patriotic. It was how most of us felt on August 27, 1944, as we set sail from New York Harbor, and passed the Statue of Liberty

ADIOS (Glenn Miller version)

What we said as we passed the Statue of Liberty and the bathers at Coney Island

BLUE SKIES

The first few days of our trans-Atlantic cruise to France

SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN (George Shearing-esque arrangement)

We landed in Cherbourg, France, Sept. 7, 1944, and bivouacked (ain't spell-checkers wonderful?) around Valognes, and later Barneville. Seems like incessant rain fell all through our month-long September vacation in France

TUXEDO JUNCTION

(Glenn Miller version)

Hey! How many Timberwolves are from Birmingham, Alabama? How many know that Tuxedo Junction is just outside of Birmingham?

DON'T SIT UNDER THE APPLE TREE (Glenn Miller version)

Remember those wonderful early vacation days in Valognes, France? Remember the apple orchards in/around our bivouacs? Remember being ordered to police those damned fallen apples each morning? Gives entirely new meaning to the words of this song, eh?

PENNSYLVANIA SIX FIVE-THOUSAND

(Glenn Miller version)

How many Timberwolves (outside of those from New York, New York) know this was the telephone number of the Pennsylvania Hotel where Glenn and Helen Miller

lived early in their just-married life?

TEA FOR TWO (Ben

Grisafi arrangement)

After vacationing around Valognes and Barneville for more than a month, we moved into Belgium. During Oct. 1944, we were assigned to the First Canadian Army, itself a part of the British First Corps. We soon learned that twice daily, the Brits liked to stop the War and have "Tea For All"

IN THE MOOD (Glenn Miller version)

After our cups of "tea", we were obviously In The Mood for the combat to come shortly, in Wuestwezel, (south) Holland

BUGLE CALL RAG (Benny Goodman version)

Assembly!! To arms!! The start of 195 consecutive days in combat for the Timberwolves – beginning 23 October 1944 in Holland

DON'T BE THAT WAY (Benny Goodman version)

How we all felt about the Germans when the Bulge started (December 1944)

DO NOTHIN'TILL YOU HEAR FROM ME (a Duke Ellington number)

What we wrote back to our girl friends after receiving a "Dear John" letter during the lull on the Roer River

MOON RIVER (a Henry Mancini waltz)

Remember that bright moonlit night of Feb. 23, 1945 on the picturesque Roer River? And that wonderful crossing? The German could see us coming for miles! That night, the Roer River surely was "Moon River"!

A FOGGY DAY (but NOT in London town)

This triggers three memories – (a) the Oregon mists at Camp Adair; (b) the smoke-filled Rhine Valley just south of the Bridge at Remagen, as we crossed the Rhine on a pontoon bridge; the

morning of 26 April 1945 – those Timberwolves assigned to cross the Mulde River and meet the Russians did it under one of the most intense fog covers of the War

ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET (Tommy Dorsey version)

6 May 1945 – V-E Day. We were on the Sunny Side of the Street

NICE 'N EASY (Frank Sinatra - Nelson Riddle arrangement)

Life after V-E Day and during that 30-day furlough back home

I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKIN (Frank Sinatra - Count Basie arrangement)

What Timberwolves sang to their girl friends or wives (or both) during that 30-day furlough

A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND (Les Brown version)

What Timberwolves sang during that 30-day furlough when they didn't have a girl friend or wife. But sometimes sung to wives and girl friends just before we reassembled at Camp San Luis Obispo

THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER YOU (Ben Grisafi arrangement)

What Timberwolves said to their buddies as they were discharged

MY BUDDY (Ben Grisafi arrangement)

What Timberwolves think about from time to time as life unfolds

The Olney Big Band played a lot more numbers than these, and I guess if I provided the full play list, you inventive Timberwolves would come up with more events related to other song titles.

Anyway – thanks to the 104th – for your service, for your deeds, and for being "Good Men" which surely ARE hard to find.

continued on page 8

continued from page 7

Rip Rice – Inducted June 7, 1943 at Camp Wolters, Texas, after 2 years of college. Basic Training at Camp Fannin (Tyler TX, June-September 1943). ASTP (Rutgers Univ.) - Sept '43 to April '45. Then to Camp Carson, CO to become a Timberwolf. Initially assigned to Company "B" 329th Engineers. After 3-4 weeks, the C.O. fell us in and asked who knew the definition of "pH". Since I was dumb enough to raise my hand and say "Sir! pH means Potential of the Hydrogen ion, Sir!", I was immediately transferred to H&S Company, 329th Engineers, where I wound up on one of the four 5-man water purification points.

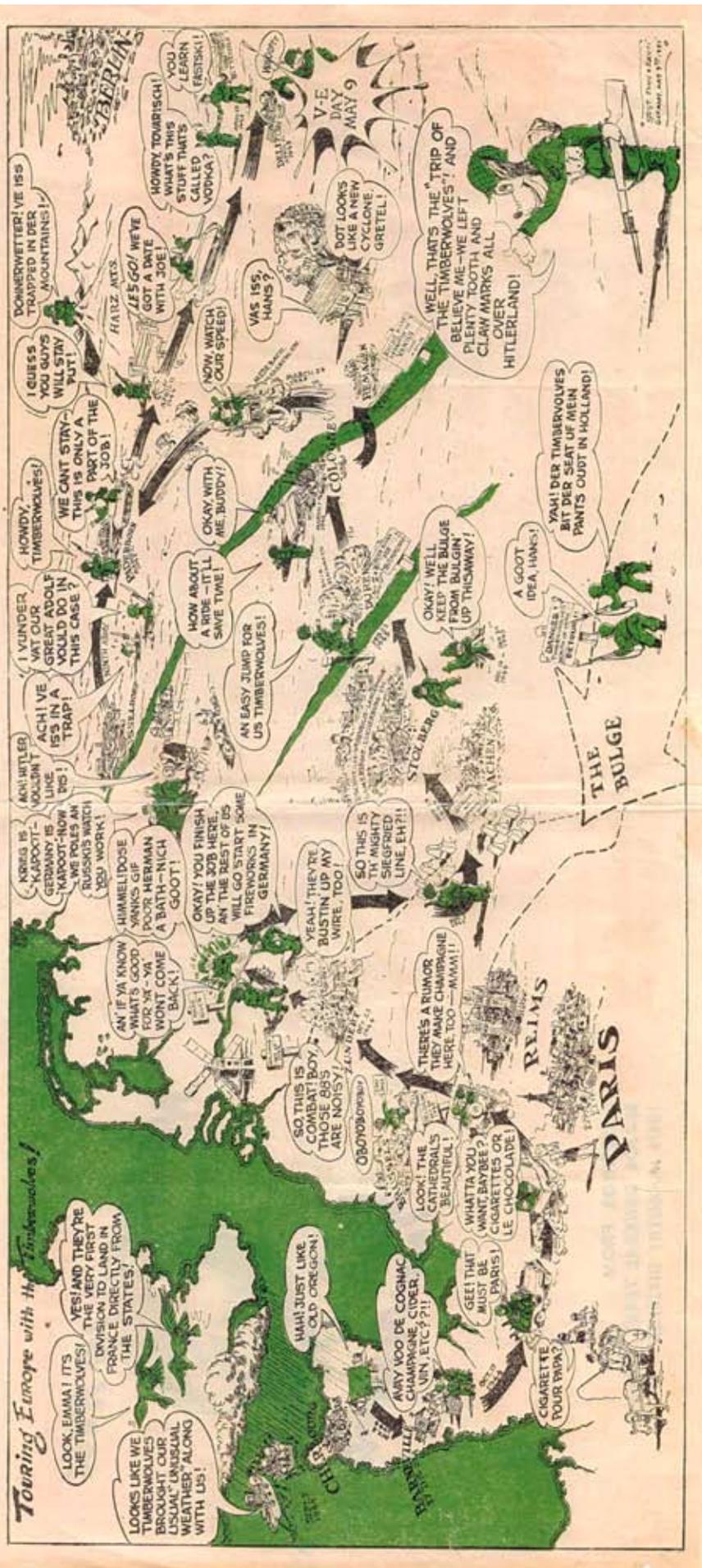
When it became clear that we were really going to war, I took my alto saxophone and tried out for the Division Band. That little guy who led the 104th Swing Band so well? Corky something? He gave me a piece of music to read, and I started playing it. But about half-way through, I got so enamored of my own playing that I got lost, and jazzily ad-libbed my way to the end. At the end of it, Corky said, "Well my boy – you've got a marvelous tone. But – you don't read music worth a c-p! Have a nice war and good luck!"

So I went back to purifying water with H&S Company. Probably the safest job in a WW-II combat zone. Too far behind the "front" to catch small arms and mortar fire, yet not close enough to the rear echelon to catch 88s and buzz bombs (Usually!).

After the War: got married to a great young lady who pushed me into graduate school nights and weekends. Got a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry, gave up playing sax, developed a career, and became a consultant in Ozone Technologies in 1972. In 1994, took up my tenor sax again and haven't looked back. Became Director of the Olney Big Band in 2003, and am mighty proud to front this magnificent group of guys and dolls who just love playing YOUR music for YOU!! Currently living in a retirement community, but am hardly retired. Ozone and music keep me hopping!

So grateful to Almighty God and my wife of 60 years for keeping me going all these years!!

Proud to be a Timberwolf!
Timberwolf Up!!!



Paying Our Respects to Cole Porter

by ROBERT REDDING

Today is October 15, 2008, the 44th anniversary of the loss of a world-famous musician known as “The Sophisticate of American Song.” Born in Peru, Indiana, on June 9, 1891 to a well-to-do family, Cole Porter embarked on a frenetic 73 year musical career.

Who was he? He was 5’ 6” tall, weighing 140 pounds. He shaved every day. He was a world traveler who loved animals and birds. He once went to Jordan and Egypt camping out in the bad weather while accompanied by a butler. He was independently wealthy. He was a heavy smoker who drove a black Cadillac. He was a gay left-handed socialite who was very romantic and passionate with women. He was afraid to be alone and disliked being bored. He worked BACKWARDS as he composed his magnificent music.

After early studies at the Worcester Academy, he attended Yale in 1909 where he roomed with Averill Harriman. He joined 11 clubs. He composed football band music and wrote 100 college songs (both the music and the lyrics). As a member of the Yale College Class of 1913 he wrote two of the school’s most famous football songs, “Bull Dog” and “Bingo, Eli Yale.” He transferred to Harvard in 1913 where Dean Acheson was his roommate, and where he joined the Music School. He did not seek Broadway success in these early years. Instead, he lived a life of privilege.

The turning point in his career came from a new friendship with young Irving Berlin.

At age 37, Cole Porter decided to make music his career. However, he suffered a series of setbacks that delayed his rise to the top of the musical profession. The turning point in his career came from a new friendship with young Irving Berlin. Berlin urged producer



Photo courtesy of guildmusic.com

Ray Goetz to track down the musical genius (then living on the Lido in Venice) to persuade him to write some American songs with a French flavor. The world greeted his first big hit “Paris”.

Then followed the end of World War I and the Great Depression. When the nation was in the depths of the Great Depression of the 1930s his message to the world was one of civilized cheer. In 1934 came the Broadway blockbuster “Anything Goes”, which catapulted him to enormous success. Unfortunately, his career suddenly became a physical disaster due to a debilitating riding accident during an October weekend in 1937. A horse fell on him, and crushed both of his legs. The incident left him with limited mobility.

After the accident he produced some of his finest music and lyrics for shows, including “Kiss Me Kate”, “Can-Can”, and “Silk Stockings.” The nation loved “Night and Day”, “Begin the Beguine”, and “I Love Paris.” During 40 years on

Broadway and in Hollywood he produced 33 stage works and the music for 23 films. He wrote for such notable cast members as Ethel Merman, Fred Astaire, Louis Armstrong and Bing Crosby. During this magnificent span of musical genius, he suffered through 30 operations and suffered constant pain for the rest of his life. After the amputation of his right leg in 1958 he lost his will to write.

In 1991, Ella Fitzgerald received the Cole Porter Centennial “You’re the Top” award at the Radio City Music Hall. The award, named for one of the songwriter’s best known hits, honored Ella’s “outstanding achievements for sustaining the Cole Porter legend.”

Cole Porter died in Santa Monica on October 15, 1964. Today, his work is more admired than ever. We honor him for his extraordinary legacy. He challenged our intelligence, chronicled our foibles, and made us laugh and cry as he touched our hearts. □

Buddy DeFranco - Part III

Welcome to the third interview of our Buddy DeFranco three part series

by STEVE VOCE

Willard was the guy who got me the job of leading the Glenn Miller Orchestra. There again it was a wise move. He also told me another time not to get a big band because he could book me with a small group. That's one time I didn't listen to him when I really should have.

Oddly enough Basie and I were never in the Metronome All Stars together, although we both made several appearances. My first was when I substituted for Benny Goodman. Goodman had won and I was second. He couldn't make it so I came in. Tommy Dorsey, Bill Harris, Johnny Hodges, Duke, Billy Strayhorn, Harry Carney, Cootie (Williams) and Rex, Sonny Berman, Pete Candoli, Flip (Wilson), Chubby, Billy Bauer, Red Norvo - that was a heavy band. Duke was supposed to write an arrangement, but instead he composed Metronome All Out on the spot. He just told the saxes and brass what to play and the rhythm what the chord changes were and it made a really great arrangement. For Look Out, which was the other title, Tommy had got a little sketch from Sy Oliver, and when it came to the place where it said 'jazz trombone' he insisted on Bill taking it. 'With a player like Bill Harris around I'm not going to embarrass myself,' he said. That was something for Tommy, because he was not considered the most humble person. But he was still the finest trombone player that I can remember hearing, technically speaking. He had a way with a melody, a marvelous approach to playing melody.

The second time, I worked with Bill Harris, Nat Cole, Dizzy and the Stan Kenton band a year later in 1947. We did those in California. Pete Rugolo wrote Metronome Riff and Flip Phil-

lips did Leap Here [the record sleeve gives Nat Cole as composer of Leap Here - SV].

Billie Holiday came to Europe in 1954 and I came with her. She was fighting her problems and had a considerate husband who was trying his best to keep her in line. He did a good job, but every once in a while Billie's friends would find her and she'd go off. She got a very bad review on our opening night in Stockholm, and then the following night she'd straightened up and was marvelous. It was very hard for her. She was tantamount to Bird, having a terrible emotional struggle with dope and other problems. Once again I was glad I made that tour, because it was once in a lifetime. I can say that I worked with Billie Holiday who to me was one of the most creative of all singers and she, like Bird, came through remarkably well in spite of all her problems. For instance, Bird played great in spite of the fact that he was hung up, and unfortunately he never really played at his best on a record. I've heard him unbelievably dazzling, but of course circumstances on record dates were against him. Either he didn't have his own horn because he'd sold it, or some unscrupulous record exec would give him a fix to do a session and he'd be half stoned.

Nelson and I roomed together and became great friends. He had a great deal to contribute and of course still does. He's one of the most prolific writers. I've always loved the way he could write behind vocalists and instrumentalists. He always knew exactly what to do.

Talking of recordings, I'm always very proud of 'The Cross Country Suite' that

Nelson Riddle wrote for me. It was never issued in England. Nelson and I had been in Tommy Dorsey's band together, where Nelson was a trombonist. But eventually he began writing virtually full time for the band. He followed Bill Finnegan, whom he idolized. Bill and Eddie Sauter were the daddies of modern band orchestration.

Nelson and I roomed together and became great friends. He had a great deal to contribute and of course still does. He's one of the most prolific writers. I've always loved the way he could write behind vocalists and instrumentalists. He always knew exactly what to do.

I had begun doing these music clinics for Le Blanc in the fifties - now I do them for Yamaha - and I wanted some music to play there. I felt it should be a combination of big band, of jazz and orchestral, so I got hold of Nelson in California in 1958 and asked him to write for me. He was working for Nat Cole at the time and was really very busy, but he accepted the assignment, and I'm glad he did, because 'The Cross Country Suite' turned out to be one of the best things he ever wrote and it won him a Grammy award. There were 11 compositions in it, and each was composed for a certain area in the United States. It was my plan to play the appropriate composition wherever I happened to be doing a clinic. It turned out so well that it was one of the most rewarding albums for me, too, and I hope sometime we'll be able to play it again. It didn't sell well, unfortunately, but that's a typical story, as you know. It was premiered with a Nat Cole show that he did at the Hollywood Bowl. Nelson had

continued on page 11

continued from page 10

written all the charts for the show and Nat had us in for the suite and it was a tremendous success with the audience. The reaction was so good that we were sure the reviews would be good too, but I should have known. They were so bad they were less than negative. One reviewer said it was Nelson Riddle's pathetic attempt at a Ferde Grofé composition played by a clarinetist. An obvious put-away.

Another controversial thing was the albums I made with accordionists. I'm not so much fond of the accordion as of the player. The instrument is like a clarinet or a violin to me, perhaps not my favorite instruments, but dependent on the player. For example take the harmonica. You hear Toots Thielmans play it and you change your mind about harmonica.

When I first heard Art Van Damme and Ernie Felice and guys like that, Joe Mooney and so on, I was impressed. Then I heard Tommy Gumina in California more or less by accident and I began working with him. It was just amazing how he played. He also developed his own accordion. He totally changed the left system of the instrument.

Tommy was one of the most proficient in terms of polytonal jazz and

My own playing is developing all the time. It's endless. It's the strangest thing about playing extemporaneous music that it seems like the more you accomplish the more you realize there's so much you haven't done.

when I go through schools in the US we find that many band directors are using the recordings I did with Tommy as an example of modern polytonal harmonic development in jazz. I was very pleased with those albums and also the later one with the Canadian accordionist Gordy



Buddy DeFranco
Photo courtesy imagez gallery

Fleming. There's always something new to develop with such a combination of instruments.

My own playing is developing all the time. It's endless. It's the strangest thing about playing extemporaneous music that it seems like the more you accomplish the more you realize there's so much you haven't done. That's not false modesty, it's just a fact of life. The old adage is you get old too fast and smart too late, and it's very true! When you're young and you play pretty good you think it's great, and if somebody compliments you your ego's apt to get way out of bounds. That's as far as you go until you begin to realize there's a big world out there in terms of music and development. Then you also realize that if you do progress the way you should, then you leave something for the next guy.

I took over from Benny (Goodman) in a sense. I brain-picked Benny, Artie Shaw

and Charlie Parker, and then did something on the clarinet that happened to be me. Nowadays, when you hear me playing, my style is different from the others and recognizably me: That's how it should be.

The next clarinet players will do the same thing, maybe incorporate some of my playing.

So you never stop trying to develop. Never!

Article provided by Eric Hoffman

Key Personnel

Music Director: Dr. Rip G. Rice
Asst. Music Director: Brian A. Damron
Business Manager: David B. Schumer
Sound Engineer: Paul Freirich
Band Historian: Dr. Sue Vazakas

Board of Directors

Dr. Rip G. Rice, President
Brad Bawek, VP of Design and Publishing
Merle Biggin
Barry Fell
Tom Harwick, Vice President (Founder)
Glenn Ochsenreiter
Robert Redding, VP for Public Relations
David B. Schumer, Secretary/Treasurer
Richard Sonnenschein

In The Mood

Editor/Designer: Brad Bawek
Contributing Editors: Robert Redding, Dr. Rip Rice
Send submissions to: bbawek@comcast.net

Friends of the OBB

The Friends of the Olney Big Band are people who love to listen and dance to big band music and are dedicated to keeping alive the spirit of American swing, dance, and jazz music. Friends support the efforts of the Band by encouraging volunteerism and by donating and soliciting and receiving gifts, bequests and endowments for the Band. Your contributions and volunteer efforts will support the following activities:

- Promoting performances of American Big Band Music for Charitable Educational and Entertainment Purposes;
- Providing Young People with the Opportunity to Hear Live Concerts in a Family-Friendly Atmosphere;
- Providing Educational and Playing Opportunities for Young and Older Musicians alike to experience and enjoy Big Band Music; and
- Promoting the Teaching and Enjoyment of Ballroom Dancing.

If you are interested in becoming a *Friend of the Olney Big Band* go to the OBB website and click *Friends of the OBB* for details.

OBB Events Schedule

Tuesday, December 2 - National Concert Party, The Music Hall at Strathmore, Bethesda, MD, 8:00 - 11:00 pm

Saturday, February 21 - Elks Club Dance
Fairfax Elks Club, Arlington, VA, 8:30 - 11:30 pm

Saturday, May 16 - Olney Days Celebration, Olney Manor Park, Olney, MD, 7:30 - 9:00 pm

Friday, May 29, 2009 - Friend's School Alumni Weekend Swing Dance, Sandy Spring, MD, 8:00 - 10:00pm

Saturday, July 4 - BlackRock Center For the Arts 4th of July Concert: Germantown, MD, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Rehearsals

Mondays 8-10 pm
Dec 1, 15 -- Jan 5, 19 -- Feb 2, 16

*All full band rehearsals
Check OBB Players page on website for further details and updates*

Quotable

After you've done all the work and prepared as much as you can, what the hell, you might as well go out and have a good time.

Benny Goodman



For Band Information Contact

Dr. Rip G. Rice - Director:
301-774-9133
RGRice4ozone@aol.com

For Booking Information Check our Website or Contact

David B. Schumer - Manager:
301-598-2107
olneyjazz@hotmail.com

www.olneybigband.org