

As I was saying...

Benny Goodman, eternal King of Swing

By JACK HILSHER

In the early 1900's Warsaw immigrants David and Dora enrolled three of their twelve children at a synagogue for free instruments and instructions. Harry got a tuba, Fred a trumpet and Benjamin, at ten the smallest, took the clarinet that was left... thus the future King of Swing, Benny Goodman, got his start. At twelve he entered a talent contest, imitating clarinetist Ted Lewis. He joined the musicians union at thirteen and in the 20s played with local Chicago bands which included many future jazz stars. Since he became a household name in the thirties and forties, countless words have been written about him without ever revealing much of the real man behind all that marvelous music. Even the anecdotes about him are misleading. For example, you've probably read of his intimidating stare (his

men called it "The Ray") at anyone whose work displeased him. Saxophonist Zoot Sims, when asked what it was like to be playing with Goodman in Siberia, replied flatly, "Every job with Benny is like playing in Siberia." But that didn't mean he was a ruthless leader. It simply reveals his complete and utter dedication to music and its perfection - to the exclusion of everything else, even normal human compassion as illustrated by an oft-told BG story. He had invited a group to his home one winter to rehearse. Andre Previn recalled that it was so frigid inside the house that his fingers were numb. Finally vocalist Helen Ward complained, "Benny, it's horribly cold in here." Benny looked at her and said, "You know, you're right," and left the room. He came back wearing sweater and the rehearsal continued! Another example was the classic taxi incident which Peggy Lee witnessed. The Goodman band

was playing the Paramount theatre in NYC with shows morning, afternoon and evening. It was often necessary to visit both RCA and their hotel in addition to the theatre, and at times it got hectic. One day Benny jumped into a cab and sat quietly for a minute. The driver finally said, "Well, buddy?" Goodman looked at him, startled, and searched for his wallet and started to get out, saying, "How much?" A recent NEWSWEEK in referring to a new album release, "BG ON THE AIR" said, "This CD is - trust us - the best ever. The band is loose, joyous, ferocious; the sheer unneurotic emotional exultation is amazingly bracing today." WOW! That rich prose is for stuff over 55 years old! Benny Goodman, the uncontested ruler of the Kingdom of Swing, died at the age of 77, still giving concerts. Wherever he is now, I'll bet he is still making glorious music and it's perfect.

Library news

'Pennies for Periodicals' project continues

By NANCY KOZEMCHAK

"PENNIES FOR PERIODICALS" is the February project for the Back Mountain Memorial Library, sponsored by the Friends of the Library. The purpose of the project is to obtain enough pennies to pay for our yearly subscriptions to the 120 magazines we subscribe to for the year. The cost for the 1994 periodicals was \$3,012.55, and we hope to augment some of this cost with the pennies donated to the library during February. A large container is available at the information desk in the lobby where our patrons may deposit their pennies. February is the month, the penny is the coin, to tie in with Abraham Lincoln's birthday and his image on the penny. If you have been saving pennies at home and need a place to put them, bring them in to the library and deposit them in the

container at the desk. We will use them to cover the cost of the periodicals. State and Federal tax forms are available at the library for patron use. The standard 1040, 1040A, and 1040EZ forms with instructions and also many of the special forms are available in a notebook which may be photocopied for use with your returns. There are also several publications of information and instructions which may be used by the patrons to help with their forms. The Back Mountain Color and Read Book is still available at the library for the purchase price of \$5.00. There are 33 winners illustrations included in the publication for coloring. A nice winter pastime for snow weary children. New books at the library: "Sacred Honor" by David Roth is a biography of Colin Powell with the sub-titled, 'The inside account of his life and triumphs'. From the

Persian Gulf to Washington's corridors of power, General Colin Powell has been one of the most visible, respected, and popular military leaders of his time and a peerless role model for African-Americans. Yet, surprisingly, the man behind the uniform has remained virtually unknown to the public. This book is the complete inside story of Colin Powell. The book is given to the library in honor of Christopher Olson, who joined the National Guard in December 23, 1993, by his parents. "Stop the Insanity" by Susan Powter is a step-by-step motivational book that will empower women everywhere to take control of their lives. The 'insanity' is the starvation and deprivation. It is the fact that we fail but as we keep trying the same things over and over—spending money and time on programs that simply do not work.

Memorial books are presented to library

The Back Mountain Memorial Library, 96 Huntsville Road, Dallas, announces the addition of the following memorial books to their collection. In memory of Shirley Thomas: "The Encyclopedia of Britain", "The Kennedys: The Third Generation", "The Best Cat Ever" presented by Bill Thomas. In memory of James Campbell: "Musical Instruments of the World" presented by Freedom Valley Girl Scout Council, "Triathlon-Achieving Your Best Personal Best" presented by Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Staines. In memory of Alfred Schmeiss: "Scared Clowns" "Slow Waltz in Cedar Bend", presented by The Billing Department at Wasserott's. "The Complete Golfer's Handbook" presented by Dr. and Mrs. Mahmoud Fahmy. "The World Almanac and Book of Facts" presented by Anne and Matt Simunovich and children. "Assumed

Identity" presented by Mr. and Mrs. John Lyons. "And If You Play Golf, You're My Friend: Further Reflections of a Grown Caddie" presented by The Billing Department at Wasserott's. "Highwire Management: Risk Taking Tactics for Leaders, Innovators and Trailblazers" presented by John and Marilyn Gregorski. "Dens of Lions: Memoirs of Seven Years" presented by Nancy and Lee Eckert. In memory of Karen Orlando: "A History of God: The 4000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam" presented by Joseph D. Orlando. In memory of Alvah Durland: "Excess Baggage: Getting Out of Your Way", "English Springer Spaniels", "Exteriors Details: an Inspirational and Practical Guide to Transforming the Outside of Your Home", "Charles Keeping's Book of Classic Ghost Stories", "Awakening, A Leg to Stand on, The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat

and Other Clinical Tales, Seeing Voices" presented by Terry Parsons. In memory of James J. Johns Sr.: "Trumpets Voluntary Music For Trumpets and Organ" presented by His Loving Family. In memory of Mrs. Loretta Moore: "Hotel Pastis" presented by Mr. and Mrs. J. Randolph. In memory of Joseph Ricci: "A Ghost in Trieste" presented by Mr. and Mrs. Louis Alba and family. In memory of Charles Kulman "Gardening for Fragrance" presented by Herb and Bernie Hill. In memory of Maisie and Fozzie "Airedale Terriers" presented by Jennie Hill. In memory of William Paul Steinhauer "Grouse Hunter's Guide" presented by Clayton M. and Francis J. Klabeo. In memory of Jane J. Eckhart: "Herbs for the Holidays: A Treasury of Decorations" presented by Beth and Bruce Rosenthal.

Sound off! Your opinion matters. Write a letter to the editor about a contemporary issue and we'll be glad to publish it. Include your name, address and a daytime phone number. We do not publish anonymous letters. Deadline is Monday at Noon. Send or bring you letter to: The Dallas Post, 45 Main Road, P.O. Box 366, Dallas PA 18612.



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Valentine's breakfast at St. Paul's

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Shavertown will celebrate a Valentine's Breakfast Sunday, Feb. 13 at 9:45 a.m. This breakfast culminates a project which collected items for the Catherine McAuley House in Plymouth. The breakfast is provided by the Men's Brotherhood and served by the women's Dorcas Society. This is the second year that St. Paul's has gathered together to help the homeless women and children in the Wyoming Valley.

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