

# North musician puts together Forties big band

By SUSAN AVERILL

FARMINGTON—Jazz, popular in the 1940's, has gone so far out of style that it is only on the rim of musical consciousness, some say. But Archie Black, leader of a high school jazz quintet, isn't prepared to agree.

"Music goes in and out of fashion, just like other styles. It changes a lot through the years. The hard rock that was popular two or three years ago is no longer a big today, and folk singers like John Denver are more popular," he said. "It goes in cycles from hard rock to pop to singers to instrumental to big bands."

The 17-year-old North Farmington High School student formed the "Archie Black Quintet" several months ago at the urging of his teacher, Leo Martoni. Martoni is a jazz musician and has been playing in the Detroit area for 30 years.

TOM BENESH plays trumpet for the group, "or any other thing that we throw at him." Tim Cannon plays the trombone, Scott Harcourt electric

piano and Tod Morell plays drums. All are students at North Farmington. Black plays clarinet, saxophone and flute, which are the same instruments his father played as a jazz musician in the Forties.

"My father was a jazz musician with his own band," he said. However, he hasn't played in the last two or three years because his active schedule does not allow the time.

Often times, though, he will take the time to coach the fledgling quintet. "He doesn't do a great deal, but he will listen and tell us what we are doing wrong and what we should do to change it."

Black is also a member of North Farmington's symphony, pep and marching bands and had planned the quintet for four months before actually forming it and scheduling the first rehearsal.

MUSICAL arrangements practiced by the band were donated by music teachers, but Black has written nearly 20 of them.

"I started studying chord progression and arranging in eighth or ninth

grade. They're kind of hard to do, and I don't have a piano which would help," he explained.

Sometimes he will lift the chords from records by playing them over and over again and writing what he hears. He will then take the arrangement to the group's next rehearsal and introduce it as part of a new "set" or collection of three numbers.

Most of the rehearsals are sandwiched between homework and bedtime on Tuesday nights, when most members can take time off from their jobs. They last for three or four hours.

Just like the big bands, their rehearsals include a half hour "jam session" where improvised musical threads are woven around a basic musical theme carried by either the piano or trombone.

IMPROVIZATION, like arranging, isn't easy.

"For this, you really have to know basic chord progression and it takes a lot of practice. Usually either the trumpet or I will improvise."

Black hopes to continue the band

through the summer, but foresees a split in the fall when he and Morell move to East Lansing to attend Michigan State University and other band members go on their way. He is considering forming a band

there, but doesn't intend to enter the music program.

"I would like to major in veterinary medicine and minor in television and radio. How's that for a combination?" he grinned.



ARCHIE BLACK

## Hills action previews trees for Grand River

FARMINGTON HILLS—City Council action April 14 opened the way for the planting of 184 trees in the boulevard section of Grand River.

The program, designed to be a Bicentennial project, was proposed by the beautification commission.

Plans for the facility are the nine medians on Grand River between Eight Mile Road and Purdue Street. Lowbidding landscaper for the project was City Wide Landscape Co.,

Inc. of Troy. The firm placed the cost at \$14,553. Jerome Prystup, the landscape architect who had worked from aerial photographs to develop the design, had estimated the cost as high as \$20,730.

MAYOR FREDERICK Lichtman questioned Prystup about the longevity of the plantings along a route where there has been heavy flooding, salting and traffic.

The architect said both Michigan State University and the state department of highways had found that the varieties recommended "had proved well over the years." The trees would be planted back from the curbsides.

"I personally feel that these plants

will be more beautiful with age," Prystup said.

When the project was first proposed to the council, Ruth Gordon beautification commission chairman, said, "This is the only boulevard section in Farmington Hills. It is the main artery from downtown Detroit to the I-96 expressway and it represents a first view of Farmington Hills to many travelers."

THE COMMISSION is also planning a meeting with owners of businesses located along the route to encourage them to make similar beautification efforts on their own property.

Among the plantings will be 92 flowering ornamentals, 39 evergreens and 33 shade trees.

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