

# That Big Band sound



Vocalist Priscilla Benson sings out, in Big Band fashion, backed by the Executives, one of the dance bands playing during August at Troy's Somerset Mall.



Madonna Finney of Miami and William A. Fox of Southfield move to nostalgic '40s music, dancing in the mall's east wing.

## Dances at the mall bring back the '40s

Dancing to the music of big bands is a free summertime treat continuing through August at Somerset Mall in Troy.

This is the third season for big bands from the area to play for dancers, who can do the classic fox trot or swing to old favorites once popularized by Glenn Miller and Benny Goodman.

The Executives, with vocalist Priscilla Benson, was the attraction Aug. 8. This group will return Monday, Aug. 29, to close the season.

Hal James and his big band played last Monday, and Dick Murphy's band is coming up Monday, Aug. 22.

As many as 1,000 people a night have attended the big band dances in the mall's east wing. Peg DuBois, who handles public relations for Somerset Mall, said the event appeals to "people who just love to dance." She defined the

crowd as being "mature — late 30s or 40-plus."

"PEOPLE ARE so glad there's someplace you can dance to that kind of music," she said. "Most places have disco and rock. It's built a lot of goodwill for us."

DuBois said the mall receives calls all winter from people who want the dances to be held year-round. "We tried it last winter, but on the first one there was a big snow. It was too iffy and we had to cancel. Still, about 30-40 people showed up in that kind of weather."

A dress code suggests men wear sports coats and women daytime dresses. "We don't want someone in running shoes and tennis shorts," DuBois said. When it gets hot, the men shed their coats, but that's alright, she said.

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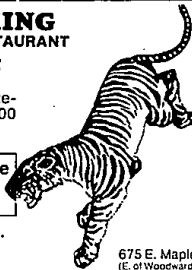
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