

# Musically Inclined Blind Aided By Singer Of 1930s

BOSTON, Mass. (AP)—Her name was Bede Best and when she sang with Joe Rines' orchestra at the St. Regis Hotel in New York 25 years ago, young men would stop, look, listen and sigh.

A petite brunette, she could belt out a song like a Louisville slugger. Her favorites were "I Only Have Eyes for You" and "With My Eyes Wide Open."

But these tunes belied the tragedy in her heart. For in 1934 Bede Best was going blind. One eye was sightless, the other had 40 per cent vision. Eventually, doctors said she would live in a world of darkness.

Later she sang with Carl Ravazza's orchestra, but the band business soon became too difficult. There was always the fear she would stumble and fall as she made her way through a clutter of instruments en route to a microphone.

An offer came from "Al Pierce and His Gang" and Bede found a niche in radio. Then came the Emory Deutsch Variety Show, but her sight continued to fail her.

It was time to return home to Boston and here she made her way as a pianist at local night spots. She married, had a son, and for a while Bede, now Mrs. Elizabeth U. Welker, found happiness.

But misfortune shadowed her. Her husband died, her mother became an invalid and Bede's sight

sank to five per cent. A corneal transplant operation was unsuccessful.

Bede began learning Braille, the system of raised dots on paper that which enables the blind to read by touch. As she mastered the system she discovered how cumbersome it was for the sightless and how difficult it must be for those who wanted to compose or play popular music.

She appealed to Lawrence Berk, who had played piano with the Rines group, and now is director of the Berklee School of Music. The two decided to work on a method of simplifying the teaching of popular music and jazz to the blind.

They developed new symbols they say can easily be learned by anyone who has mastered Braille. The symbols, using the Braille cell system, give the melody line, the chords and time values simultaneously.

The blind person who has memorized his piano keyboard thus is able to "read" the corresponding Braille symbols for the notes that comprise the tune and can also memorize the chords which provide the accompanying harmony.

Students using Braille to learn music composition often had to use two 9x13 inch sheets to learn a few bars of music. It required 15 sheets to learn a chorus. The sightless attempting such a chore often would become discouraged, lose interest, give up in despair.

Bede and Berk worked out a system that boiled down an entire song to one sheet. It features new principles of harmony and encourages improvisation.

Their system will become part of the curriculum at Berklee next September. It will be offered to the blind at reasonable tuition rates. Students in the class will be encouraged to become teachers themselves.

And at the head of the class—as a Berklee instructor—will be Mrs. Welker, who as Bede Best lost her sight, but never her courage.

# "DENNIS THE MENACE"



"I'M NOT ACCUSING ANYONE. I JUST SAID I'M NOT EATING ANY MUSHROOMS THAT MR. WILSON GAVE DENNIS."

# Video Scribe Leaves Jail After Serving Sentence

JERSEY CITY, N.J. (UPI)—Television columnist Marie Torre today left Hudson County Jail where she served a 10-day contempt of court sentence for refusing to tell a judge the source of a disputed news item about singer Judy Garland.

The 34-year-old New York Herald Tribune columnist, whose fight to maintain the anonymity of her news source won nationwide attention, walked to freedom about 9:30 a.m. e.s.t. after processing

and saying goodbye to jail officials.

She wore the same navy blue dress as when she entered the jail Jan. 5. Miss Torre got up about 6 a.m. with other woman prisoners and ate an early breakfast.

She turned in her blue and white prison uniform and later claimed some possessions in the personal property room of the jail. She was given two large cartons to carry the mail sent to her by friends and well-wishers.

Her husband, TV producer Hal Friedman, and a host of reporters and cameramen were expected to be on hand to greet the attractive newspaperwoman as she leaves the jail.

But Miss Torre's release has been dampened by the prospect of further contempt action if she continues to withhold the identity of her source for the disputed item.

Miss Garland's attorney, Lionel S.

Popkin, has said he "probably will" ask Miss Torre again to name the source.

Described by Federal Judge Sylvester J. Ryan as "the Joan of Arc of her profession," Miss Torre has declined to name a television network executive whom she quoted in a statement about Miss Garland.

Miss Garland subsequently filed a \$1,393,333 suit against the network (CBS) charging breach of contract and libel. Neither Miss Torre nor the Herald Tribune was named a defendant.

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Official Asks Fishing Ban

PORTLAND (AP)—The February commercial steelhead season on the Columbia River should be abandoned, a member of the Washington Game Commission said here Tuesday.

Few commercial fishermen are dependent on the February season, said Al Pritchard at a meeting of the Oregon Fish Commission and the Washington agency.

The two bodies met here to set the dates of 1959 commercial seasons on the river. But Harold Johnson of the Oregon Fish Commission later said the dates will be set sometime in the future.

Pritchard said that the commercial fishing is relatively unimportant when compared to the 200,000 sports fishermen who use the river.

And he added: "We cannot put a dollars and cents value on the aesthetic contributions to human welfare."

# Klamath Falls City Chief Completes Insurance Study

A thorough analysis of the city of Klamath Falls insurance coverage was recently completed by City Manager G. S. Vergeer Sr., who made a complete report to the city council Monday night.

As a result of the survey, the amount of insurance carried by the city has been reduced approximately \$200,000.

On marine floater insurance, designed to secure all hazard coverage on construction equipment not subject to auto coverage and other equipment used and left off of city owned premises, Vergeer reported that coverage of \$132,756.78 was reduced to the necessary total of \$51,825, a reduction of \$80,931.78.

On property and fire insurance, he reported that building valuations were generally realistic, but contents revealed some drastic errors in valuation.

Final results on this type insurance was that a total coverage of \$813,230 was required. Under the 90 per cent average clause, this demanded insurance in the amount of \$731,907. The reduction order to this amount resulted in cancellation of insurance totaling \$118,093.

On auto insurance, the city manager reported several vehicles

covered which were no longer owned by the city, two pieces of equipment covered by this policy which were already covered by another policy. A total of 34 items were changed in valuation, in addition to these.

Total coverage was reduced from \$163,791 to \$146,148, resulting in cancellation of \$17,643.

Vergeer also submitted an insurance commission division list to the council which showed that in accordance with the regulation setting up the insurance broker policy, 12 insurance men came in for a full share of the total commissions, a share being equal to \$17,000. In addition, three insurance men received half shares of \$43.55 each.

The two brokerage firms who handled the city's insurance program, The Landry Company and Driscoll and Padgett, divided 25 per cent of the total commissions, amounting to \$195.96 each, as their share for brokerage fees.

The council accepted the division report, and approved the change in insurance coverage as outlined by the city manager.

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# Police Slate Rifle Classes

The city police department has completed its first series of rifle classes for young marksmen and is about ready to begin new classes.

Next Monday, in fact, is the date for enrolling for the next series of classes on basic rifle instruction, gun handling and safety.

Police Lt. Bud Adkins warns, however, that applicants for new classes will be enrolled on a first-come, first-enrolled basis. No enrollments will be taken until 4 p.m. Monday, January 19, and Adkins advises that applicants should be accompanied by their parents because parental signatures are required.

The classes are open to students between 10 and 15 years old. Rifles for class use are provided by the police department.

In the class just completed, Adkins said, 84 boys and girls were enrolled, including 80 students who never had been in rifle classes before.

When the 10-week course was completed, 60 students earned certificates and diplomas, and 40 of them—almost half the class—earned pro marksman medals.

"It's been a very successful class," Adkins said. "We're very happy with the results."

Adkins reminded prospective applicants for the forthcoming class that assignments as to what night a student wishes to attend class also are made on a first arrival basis.

Applications may be made at 4 p.m. Monday at the city police station, 425 Walnut Street. When the next classes are filled, Adkins said, no further instruction will be available until next November.

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