

# Local

## Breeden to take era with him

By DILLARD STONE  
Battalion Staff

He's been Breeden jazz musicians at North Texas State University for 11 years.

An era in NTSU music will end Aug. 31, 1981, when Leon Breeden resigns as music director. A large man with grey hair and black moustache, Breeden obviously leaves the program with a great deal of regret, satisfaction and pride.

A short conversation with Breeden revealed him to be enthusiastic, talkative and concerned about his students and the program.

Since 1959, Breeden figures he's seen a part of the lives of thousands of musicians trained in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. He's seen the jazz education program at NTSU grow from virtually nothing to international prominence.

He admits his bands have been criticized by jazz purists for a lack of presence — but in his mind, critical acclaim is secondary to educational accomplishment.

"We've brought jazz education to a place of importance. Jazz had to break in the back door here — even in New Orleans," Breeden said Thursday night. "People don't want their kids growing up to be jazz musicians."

His jazz education program at NTSU has helped bridge that gap, he said.

"We've been criticized for not having a style of our own," he said. "We're not trying to develop a North Texas Style — we're training these kids to do anything."

People say the NTSU band is too disciplined, he said, but he feels discipline is essential in a jazz musician. "We don't want to sound like a 3 a.m. nightclub jam."

Despite Breeden's claims, the band does have a sound of its own, the diversity of the music sources notwithstanding. Add to that diversity a director who uses the band as a unit instead of as a showcase for individual talent, and you've got a style as distinct as any major jazz band's.

Breeden's philosophy is perfect — that of an educator trying to train his pupils in as many varied styles as they can handle.



Chip McNiell plays a tenor sax solo while Leon Breeden conducts the rest of the North Texas State University One O'Clock Lab Band.

Breeden is in his 22nd and last year as NTSU music director. The band played in Rudder Auditorium Thursday night.

Staff photo by George Dolan

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The One O'Clock Lab Band will play 150 arrangements this year. Many of them will be sight read.

"One time we even sight read a whole concert — ten numbers," Breeden said with pride.

The tight, professional sound of the One O'Clock Lab Band belies the fact that its members are fulltime students.

"Many people who hear our band can't believe they're students," Breeden said.

Although the musicians change yearly, sometimes more frequently, the band's reputation continues to grow each year. Two Grammy nominations, a White House performance and countless jazz music festivals after Breeden took the reins, NTSU is now a major supplier of musicians to jazz and other bands across the country.

But while Breeden will soon retire, whoever assumes his position will inherit his legacy — one of the finest college jazz bands in America.

## Lab band cooks on its own

By DILLARD STONE  
Battalion Staff

Sometimes you have to wonder why Leon Breeden is even around. He must wonder sometimes, too.

Breeden conducts his band with... well, respect is about the only word I can think of. He doesn't work like a typical band conductor, or even like a typical college bandmaster.

But then the North Texas State University One O'Clock Lab Band isn't a typical college band.

Breeden appears to be there only to start and end the band's numbers. A foot stomp, a click of the fingers. Horns up. Eyes on director. A count: "One, two, One, two, three..." And off they go.

Breeden leisurely conducts a few bars, then steps back to let the band do its work. He treats the band as a unit, his students with respect.

In return he gets togetherness and precision from the one, spontaneity and unstructured solos from the other.

It's a formula that's been working wonders since the late '60s. NTSU's showcase band continues to wow the world in the same way it wowed Texas A&M Thursday night.

It's a rare treat for a performer to find an audience which requests two encores — and it's even rarer to find performers who oblige.

### Review

Those two elements meshed Thursday night. It was my second Lab Band concert, and I've still got to convince myself that these guys are students. Fulltime college students. In addition to being musicians.

This band is good. Breeden's use of the entire band as a vehicle for training his students is the band's selling point: Instead of showcasing individuals, the band works as a unit. No performer merits recognition as outstanding; they're all good

individually — as a unit, they're outstanding.

The band is amazing in its versatility. Ballads, upbeat medlies, big-band melodies and modern renditions all fall easily within the band's reach.

Take the opening number: "Nanu-Nanu." Fast-paced, good stuff. Then the medium-speed "Mean What You Say." Then slow it all the way down with a beautiful ballad, highlighted by Chip McNiell's haunting tenor sax solo.

Charlie Parker would not have recognized his "Donna Lee," but then probably nobody would have. The frenetic trombone slide work keyed an arrangement which, as Breeden said, "defies all description."

That probably describes the band best: as a college band, it does defy all description.

## DIETING?

Even though we do not prescribe diets, we make it possible for many to enjoy a nutritious meal while they follow their doctor's orders. You will be delighted with the wide selection of low calorie, sugar free and fat free foods in the Souper Salad Area, Sbis Dining Center Basement.

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QUALITY FIRST

## Group agrees to request federal transit funds for inter-city buses

By TRACY L. FENTON  
Battalion Reporter

At a meeting Thursday afternoon at the Bryan-College Station Urban Transportation Study Steering Committee, the two cities agreed to certify the need for federal funds for a public transit system.

The system would be an inter-city transportation program between Bryan and College Station.

Spokesman D. D. Williamson said one of the main things that councilmen want to know is which of the two cities will own the system and who will manage and operate it.

He said joint ownership had been recommended and was preferred, but the legal statutes of joint ownership must be examined before any decisions were made.

Studies on routes, costs and schedules have already been made and updated, Williamson said. Now, he

said the federal funds must be applied for before they become unavailable.

In other business, improvements on Easterwood airport, an energy contingency plan, a connecting street system and a rural public transportation program for the elderly and handicapped were discussed.

Harry Raisor, manager of Easterwood Airport, said the traffic count at Easterwood is approximately 8000 aircraft per month, 1500 more than Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin.

Raisor said Easterwood also supplies fuel to a helicopter ambulance service that flies out of Houston.

"Easterwood is what we consider 'bursting at the seams,'" he said.

Raisor said in the last two to two and a half years, minor improvements have been made on the airport. These include runway lights,

enlarged parking apron, terminal renovation and new fuel pits.

"Progress has been made and we're not totally self-sufficient but we're working on it," Raisor said.

Hubert Nelson and Al Mayo presented a program on turning more streets and roads into arterials or connectors.

They said people have overlooked the rate of growth in our community and how it has affected our transportation.

Nelson and Mayo are studying which streets should be connector streets and how many there should be.

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If it is crazy, it's going to surprise a whole lot of people. In fact, we understand that Pilot Razor Point even has what it takes to score extra points with football players.

It also comes to our attention that many coaches are fans of the Pilot Fineline. Along with all the other Razor Point features, the 69¢ Pilot Fineline has the strength and drive to go through carbons. It's hard to resist a pen that holds the line like a Pilot.

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