Whistler finds musical career

CHAGRIN FALLS, Ohio (AP) In an increasingly high-tech world of music, all Ron McCroby needs to perform is his pucker.

Of course, a microphone with a wind shield helps when he goes before a large audience as a jazz or classical whistler.

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McCroby has coined the word 'puccolo" to describe his wind instrument, a sort of piccolo formed by puckering his lips.

"Puccolo is an instrument created by the lips," he says. "It's my word. I think to have my word in the dictionary some day would be

"I'm a puccoloist. I've been whistling ever since I was a little

McCroby has gone from advertising executive in Cincinnati to musician of some renown. He has performed internationally, appeared at major jazz festivals and on network television, while creating two jazz albums and one classical album.

Seven years ago, McCroby's wife, Barbara, suggested he re-cord his whistle. At the time, he was a part-time musician playing darinet in dance bands.

"I made a little tape and got some interest," he says. "I started to think that maybe there is something here. In addition to just being able to technically do this, I had a lot of musical background. The listener could say, 'Wait a minute. That's real music this guy is doing, not some freaky bird

A tape McCroby made in 1981 of jazz whistling landed him an appearance on the Merv Griffin Show. A guitar player on the show took his tape to the producer of the Monterey Jazz Festival, and McCroby was invited. He displayed the art of puccolo in 1982 at the 25th Monterey Jazz Festival, an event which featured many of the jazz greats.

"Well, that was it," he says. "That did it. That even got picked up by CBS Evening News. After that, I signed a recording

McCroby, 55, the father of six, moved his family to Chagrin Falls 3-and-a-half years ago after living for about 20 years outside Cincinnati. He says his new neighbors have only a vague idea of his musical accomplishments. They do know he travels a lot.

He says he feels accepted as more than just an oddity in jazz

"With a lot of the jazz players," he says, "when I first came on the scene they would wonder, 'Oh really? You're going to whistle? Can't wait, man.' Then I start doing some things and they say, 'This guy is an official player. He just uses a different instrument.'

McCroby says he does not need to practice his whistling technique. His "circular breathing" method makes his whistle consistent, whether he inhales or ex-

"It's to the point now where if I can think it, I can pretty well execute it," he says. "There are no fingering problems. There is no real range difficulty. There are no sharps or flats that I really have to worry about, although generally speaking I do most tunes in the standard key they are written in. I sound like a piccolo."

McCroby, a chubby, bald man with glasses, seems likely to be the start of a practical joke when he appears on stage with no instru-ment in hand. Once he begins to whistle, his eyelids tighten, reflecting his concentration, and the fingers of his left hand often play notes on an imaginary clarinet.
"When I'm out there perform-

ing, I am definitely into it, because it's very serious work I'm doing," McCroby says. One of his recent thrills was

performing with the Cleveland Orchestra.

"Of late, I'm doing quite a few symphony concerts," he says. "It's really fun when the orchestra people have not heard me before, and then I come out and do Vivaldi's Piccolo Concerto."

wall banging on a tin can. It's dy-namic. You have to come across with

a powerful sound and legitimate

hard swing, a hard edge, and we (Colon's band, the Legal Aliens)

Years ago, he said, "Dizzy Gilles-

pie and more jazz players

came in to play this stuff, because of

music a lot. We have a lot of jazz har-

"I've made some changes," he said. "Most of them have stuck. When I did them I got a lot of flack. I was the first guy to start changing

Cuban rhythm to Puerto Rican, then

to calypso. Some of the old-timers,

Colon insists that smaller forces

monies and jazz melodies in it.'

than a big band can play salsa.

Former Marines see Vietnam from older, wiser perspective

HUE, Vietnam (AP) — Winding their way over the green mountains of Vietnam through the misty Hai Van Pass, six former U.S. Marines revisited the battlefields of fallen comrades on a sentimental journey

Where only heavily armed military convoys dared to go two decades ago, they rode in a van over the 68 miles of winding roads from Da Nang to Hue, stopping en route to embrace the beauty of the mountains and the serene waters of the

South China Sea.

"This pass was continually harassed," said Robert Dalton, a 54year-old free-lance writer from Davidsonville, Md., during a stop Sunday at an old French fort.

Dalton, as a captain 20 years ago, commanded Kilo Company, 26th Marine Regiment, 1st Division, which patrolled sections of the Hai

"This is fantastic, the natural splendor," said Nate Genna, 41, a maintenance man from Boston, during another stop to look out over the bay at a tiny fishing village set off by a steepled church in its center.

Their odyssey brought them at nightfall to the old imperial capital of Hue, where emperors sat in ancient times and where U.S. Marines

fought in modern times. The capital was established more than 200 years before Christ and was the seat of the old Annam empire for 21 centuries, but it was here that U.S. Marines fought house-to-house and lost 142 men during North Vietnam's Tet offensive of 1968.

The Marines, on a 10-day visit to Vietnam, arrived in Da Nang by plane from Hanoi.

"I always dreamed about returning here just to take a nice slow relaxed walk without any fear, and I finally did it 21 years later."

> - Nate Genna, former Marine

"I had butterflies in my stomach just seeing the place, the mountains around it," said Frank Noe, a firefighter from Stoughton, Mass. "I could see the strip from way ahead when we were comimg in."

For Noe, it brought back mem-

ories of his first arrival in Vietnam in youth. You can't go home, like the November 1967 when he landed in Da Nang as a frightened 19-year-old

The revetments then were filled with U.S. jets that regularly bombed North Vietnam, and the air base rustled with military activity. But this time, the 40-year-old Noe saw only the red noses of Vietnamese MiG fighters between the embankments, many of them rusting away.

A warmer reception awaited them in Da Nang, which was once a part of South Vietnam.

'There's more of the relaxed atmosphere here than in the north," said Mike Wallace, a 41-year-old farmer from Langdon, Kan.

"Look at the reception," Dalton said. "The people move a little bit brighter. Their faces are a little more open. They're a lot less constrained and they know us, they know Americans.
"They smile a little bit more than

the people up north do, and they just accommodate Americans a lot

Genna said, "A lot look mysteriously familiar, but at the same

time something isn't the same.
"I think what's missing is my

saying goes. I was trying not to think. I was just looking. I saw a place I saw a long time ago; it looks the same but it's not the same, because I'm not the same. I'm 22 years

In Hanoi, the former Marines were greeted with mostly stoic looks and an occasional forced smile from Vietnamese soldiers they once fought against.

Gene Spanos, a 39-year-old police lieutenant from Rosemont, Ill., and the former Marines, all except Dalton members of the 11th Marines, said they were concerned that land mines their engineer battalion had planted were still killing and wound-

"In wartime the Americans also sprayed chemicals," one of the Vietnamese officers said.

They shook hands for photographers and television cameras in an embrace that was less than sponta-

"You always had to carry a loaded rifle, a helmet and a flak jacket and anything could happen," Genna

"I always dreamed about returning here just to take a nice slow re-laxed walk without any fear, and I fi-nally did it 21 years later."

Buddhist facilities expand to meet growing needs

the Rev. Hung-I Shih chants a Sanskrit prayer, facing a golden Buddha

Almost bowing in their seats, the worshipers respond in Chinese, echoing the monk's low, resonant

The pace of the chant escalates. At the rear, an aging Chinese woman squeezes her eyes shut. She keeps chanting.

Nearby a little girl in pigtails

watches in wide-eyed wonder. She has not yet been schooled in the intricacies of formal worship for the Texas Buddhist Association.

Some Sundays, the association gathers at Bodhi Center, its educational wing located in a Bellaire shopping center. Other Sundays, services are at Buddha Light Temple on Land Road in southeast

room only

To reduce crowding and better meet congregational needs, the association broke ground last month for a new Buddhist complex in southwest Houston.

That 2.5-acre site someday will be home to Jade Buddha Temple of America, a regional Buddhist center built with pagodas in Oriental style. A 7-foot jade Buddha from Burma will be the focal point of the worship

The \$1 million facility will include an education section, a meditation stands for the Sakyan sage, he was hall, research facilities, a retreat cen-born among the Sakya people in ter and quarters for overnight what is now Nepal.

Buddhism will find a haven," in the ried and had a son. Later, concerned

HOUSTON (AP) — At the front, new complex, the association says in about old age, disease and death, he

'The devout shall find a sacred place to worship and express spirituality. In our hectic and demanding lives, we will find a quiet sanctum for divine contemplation.'

For the Chinese-Americans who dominate the association's membership, building the temple means coming of age as an American religious community.

The association helps newcomers adjust to American ways.

Founded in 1979, the association's early members were graduate stu-dents and scholars from the University of Houston. Gradually that nucleus expanded.

Today, members range from

plumbers to physicians.

While most are of Chinese descent, other Asians also belong. And association leaders estimate white ouston. Americans comprise about 10 per-Either place, it is often standing-cent of the membership.

> "Everyone has a different purpose in being here," said May C. Lu, a congregational leader.

"Outside we may all look the same. But some are handymen. Some are professors. Probably the worship brings us all together from different (social) classes because the professors. spirit of Buddhism is equality.

That spirit began with Siddhartha Gautama, the fifth century B.C. Indian philosopher known as Buddha. Also known as "Sakaymuni," which

"All who yearn to understand ury in a Hindu society, Buddha mar-A prince reared in sheltered lux-

retreated to the forest to become an ascetic. But he found no insight even in that path.

Returning to regular life, Buddha ate normal food once again and realized what is known as the "truth of the middle way," a path between extreme worldliness and asceticism. It emphasized self-discipline, self-re-straint, cultivation of morality and spiritual development.

From Buddha's original teachings has come the diverse, vast body of experience, practice and philosophy known as Buddhism. It has been shaped and altered by various cultures, including China, where Bud-dhism filtered in during the first and

second centuries.
Well-known Buddhist strands to-day include Theravadan, Mahayanan and Zen. All are represented in the United States, where Buddhism seems as pluralistic as Protestantism.

Some Buddhists are working for greater dialogue and unity. But with so many different ethnic groups, im-migrants and Western converts, individuality and decentralization are hallmarks of the estimated 5 million Buddhists in the United States.

One international Buddhist fellowship lists 58 separate Buddhist organizations in America, while some Americans count several hundred Buddhist fellowships.

The Texas Association is of Mahayanan roots. Defined as "traditional" Buddhism by its followers, the "Mahayana" (or wide path) emphasizes that the way to enlightenment is open to all.

inates in nations north and east of

Grasping the subtleties of even that single Buddhist strand can be difficult for Westerners schooled in Judeo-Christian tenets.

"I think there are things which they would find radically different,' said John Whittlesey, a local Buddhist who has studied the religion for three decades.

"And they could find an obstacle in the 'annata' principle, which is the concept that the existence of a permanent self, soul or cental entity is a fiction. Also stressed is impermanence and the ubiquity of suffering.

"Perhaps one of the biggest differences — this appeals to some Westerners — is there is no theology in terms of statements about the existence of God, the existence of an afterlife or an explanation of creation. These are foreign questions to

Buddhism."

For Buddhists, the "way to salvation is open to all and depends for its attainment neither on faith nor on divine grace but only on understanding 'the way things really are,' "said Richard Gombrich in the introduction to the book "The World of Buddhism."

"Such understanding, it says, can be achieved only after careful moral and psychological preparation.

Salvation consists in a state of blissful calm so long as this life lasts and (there is) no rebirth when it comes to an end. This goal is some-thing for individuals to aim at and

In true Mahayanan Buddhist spirit, the Texas Buddhist Associa-It developed in India shortly be- tion willingly opens its doors to outfore the Christian era and now dom- siders.

'Tour of Duty' gets new cast members

their socks would go up and down, telling me, 'You can't do that.' We didn't have those Cuban roots to draw back on, since we're all born

When he and the Legal Aliens tour in Latin America, he said, "I know there is culture shock when they see us relaxing. We're talking English. We're all Latins. On stage

we're singing in Spanish. His previous record was "Especial named for the jail cell in Medellin, Colombia, where he and the band were held for two days in 1985 after being late - not their fault, he good enough to hold up on the radio said — for a concert.

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Kim Del-aney had to read some history to get confused with Dana Delany, who ready for her new role in the series stars as a nurse in "China Beach." 'Tour of Duty," which is set in a war she is too young to remember.

Delaney joins the CBS series as it returns to the air on Tuesday night for its second season, this time with more emphasis on women in the war. She plays Alex Devlin, a combat correspondent for a wire service called American News International. "I had no real awareness of the

war," Delaney says. "The show's set in 1968 and I was only 7 years old. I didn't have much time to study before I got the job. But I've spent a lot time since then reading and looking at documentaries, trying to find something written by a

In its first season last year, "Tour of Duty" focused on an Army plalate 1960s. This season, the time frame moves ahead slightly to 1968 and the platoon is reassigned to Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base in Saigon.

Besides Delaney, Betsy Brantley and Dan Gauthier have also joined the cast. Brantley plays a civilian psychologist working for the government and Gauthier is a young heli-copter pilot. The show's returning stars are Terence Knox, Stephen Caffrey, Tony Becker, Stan Foster, Ramon Franco and Miguel A. Nu-

The changes in "Tour of Duty," do. heretofore an all-male show that revolved around combat situations, undoubtedly reflect the success of

"My character has an office in Saigon but she spends a lot of time in the field," she says. "It's a good role because I'm not with just one person. I'm involved with all the people. Alex is innocent when she arrives. She hasn't been corrupted by the world. She wants to get to the truth of each story, whatever it is, at any

Alex Devlin also develops a love interest with Lt. Myron Goldman, the platoon leader played by Stephen Caffrey. She's also attracted to Lt. Johnny McKay, the helicopter piget a feeling of the passion people lot played by Gauthier. Her role as a felt then. It's particularly hard to correspondent requires her to take frequent trips to combat zones in a helicopter.

Delaney made her professional debut in the ABC soap opera "All toon assigned to combat duty in the My Children" in New York. She had a recurring role in NBC's "L.A. Law" and earlier this year was in the NBC miniseries "Something Is Out

> In the miniseries, she played the girlfriend of Joe Cortese, who is her

boyfriend in real life.
"I grew up in Philadelphia and went to all-girls Catholic schools," she says. "I didn't act in high school because I was very shy. I had four brothers and I probably spent more time at their school than mine. Actually, I didn't know what I wanted to

'My father came home from work one day and said how about court re-ABC's "China Beach." That show, lege, but he knew I was rebelling set at a hospital and rest and recreagainst more schooling. I studied ation area, puts its emphasis on the women in Vietnam. porter? He wanted me to go to col-

Gibson deals with stardom

LOS ANGELES (AP) — How does a young actor deal with suddenly being named an interna-tional star and "the sexiest man

"You deal with it by a trick of the mind," said Mel Gibson. "You figure: Is it worrying me that much? Does anybody else give a damn as much as I do? So you decide not to. It's easy.

The Gibson method appears to be working. He seems unchanged from the time he first arrived here seven years ago after appearing as Mad Max in the Australian movie, "The Road Warrior." He still displays a hint of shyness, contrasting with the self-assured roles he has played on the screen.

The actor was here publicizing his latest Warner Bros. film, "Tequila Sunrise," co-starring Kurt Russell, Michelle Pfeiffer and Raul Julia. Gibson's last role cast him as a Los Angeles cop in "Le-thal Weapon." The new movie puts him on the other side of the law.

"Things don't quite match up, and that's what appealed to me about the script," Gibson said. "Here's a man who has a very il-licit lifestyle and has had an unsavory career. Yet he always tells the truth and deals honorably with people. That makes an interesting combination.

"The script doesn't deal with good and bad but shades of gray in-between. He's retired (from drug-dealing). But nobody wants

him to retire. In "Tequila Sunrise," Gibson is buddy, Russell, a narcotics cop. Pfeiffer is the beauty caught between. The writer is Robert Towne, who wrote "Chinatown"; he also directed "Tequila."

"The script just lobbed into my

mailbox one day," Gibson said.
"It was one of those scripts that

you just kept turning the pages; you didn't know why. It demanded a second read. I liked it." Gibson sounds totally American in the movie. In conversation, the Australian creeps in. That's only natural for a fellow who spent his first 12 years in Peeks-

kill and Mount Vernon, N.Y. His mother was Australian, his father an American who decided to emigrate to Sydney with his 10 children so the older sons would not be drafted during the Vietnam

Gibson was going to be a chef or a journalist until his sister submitted an application at a drama institute for himat the University of New South Wales. He appeared in plays and a cheapie flick, "Summer City," that attracted director George Miller. The result was the star-making Road Warrior.'

Gibson filmed two sequels and also co-starred in the acclaimed World War I film, "Gallipoli," and Peter Weir's "The Year of Living Dangerously." His American-made movies have been less successful: "The Bounty," "The River," "Mrs. Soffel." Only "Le-thal Weapon" has lighted up the

Salsa brings together e Cellar jazz, Cuban rhythms for New York sounds

(AP) — Salsa is a musical style of and at a concert. It's not just wall-to-Cuban origin, with other Central and South American rhythms and azz added. Salsa makes you want to

And, said Willie Colon, now 38, (Colon's band who has been playing salsa since he was 15, it's a New York sound and a New York word.

Years ago, I pie and more

"I think Izzy Sanabria, who used to have a magazine called Latin New 'the rhythms. They influenced the ork, made up the word," he said.

"We just decided to accept it. We wanted to distinguish a New York ound instead of Afro-Cuban music. "It's a city music. In any big city where they speak Spanish, you'll be able to find somebody playing this. They won't be singing about grass

1:30

hacks and cutting sugar cane. "The U.S. is catching the fever for salsa. In America, Latin music surrounds us a lot. Rock bands have Latin percussion. You've got the Mi-ami Sound Machine. Latin hip hop is ust another expression of salsa —

Colon's latest record, "Altos Seretos" ("Top Secrets"), which indudes some salsa innovations, was

eleased last month on Fania. In South America, he said, "Salsa as a basic folkloric music and will not listen to the others. Colombia has a rhythm called ballenato; Vene-

uela has gaita. "Salsa has a lyric content that's

Gravedigger works old-fashioned way

OWENSBORO, Ky. (AP) — Digng graves by hand is a dying art. According to Alvin Lewis, it takes

"I've worked with a lot of kids," ays Lewis, 59. "Most of them don't Several of the younger people ired to work with Lewis at Mater

Dolorosa Cemetery in Owensboro

uit within a day or two, he says. 'A lot of them don't know what ney're getting into until they get to ing it," he says. "It's not easy like ey think it is.'

The only way to find out how

rd it is to dig a grave, Lewis says, is "grab hold of a spade and dig Lewis, who's been digging graves or 11 years, says it's like anything e - you get used to it.

Most people think heavy equipment such as backhoes dig graves in a matter of minutes, Lewis says. But in older cemeteries where the monuments are placed close together, it's impossible to use machinery, so the graves are dug by hand.

Lewis has dug as many as six graves in a week. The holes must be about 5 feet deep, 8 feet long and nearly 4 feet wide to accommodate the vault, Lewis says.

Lewis grew up on farms in Hart and LaRue counties and has always worked with the soil in one way or another. Although many people think of digging graves as miserable work, Lewis says he loves just about everything about the job.

"I'll stay there until they let me go," he says, "or I get too old, I don't know which."