



**NEW YORK SOPRANO** Ann Hampton Callaway (center) pays tribute to jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald through song. Her Saturday night performance in Brownville featured a Kansas City trio.



**IN MID-FLIGHT**, South Sioux City pilot J.P. Martin tightens the gas cap on his father's 1939 Piper Cub. Martin said the two-seater plane had been in his family for three generations.

# Jazz, stones make splash along river

**RIVER** from page 12

a family friend. Martin says coasting thousands of feet above the earth without the hum of an engine provides him unparalleled tranquility.

"That glider is the top," Martin says. "You'll be up there with a bald eagle and the sound ... it's like the sound that comes through a car window when it's cracked. It's so quiet and serene."

Overhead, Martin's father, Gene, prepares to drop the tow rope from the 1964 Pawnee spray plane that launched the glider to freedom.

"He's going to drop it," Martin says of the impending fall. "One, two three, four: There it goes."

Boarded up split-level homes and gravel roads provide the backdrop for 11 children gathered at an intersection in this Omaha Tribe town.

The children, ranging in ages from 6 to 12, observe two mutts copulating in a nearby ditch.

Dave, 6, understands enough of the situation to call it, but not enough to allow its completion.

He tries to pull the dogs apart, upsetting the barking animals.

"How are they supposed to get place-to-place when they're stuck together?" Dave, the group's leader, asks.

Two minutes later: "They came unloose. She's gonna have some babies somewhere."

the Interstate 80 viaduct crossing the Missouri into Council Bluffs, Iowa. Underneath, at the Heartland of America Park, time seems a bit slower. Sean, Euvon and Raphael, three black youngsters, participate in some late summer respite by gliding rocks over the park's pond.

The Chicago and Tennessee natives relieve their Saturday afternoon boredom as other families stroll along a nearby sidewalk. If their day began with the mundane, it is relieved by the play at hand.

"I think I found the right one," Raphael hears Euvon say, ready to sail a concrete piece over the dark water.

## Aye, aye, my captain

Dropping south 72 miles to Brownville, visitors discover a river

town reminiscent of a New England coastal village.

Built in 1854 as the capital of the Nebraska Territory, a rich history bespeaks the community's many and varied transformations.

Among the attractions are two riverboats - Belle of Brownville and Spirit of Brownville, artisan shops, a 31-year-old summer repertory theater and the monthly Brownville Concert Series.

Held in a restored Lutheran church transplanted from Peru, Neb., in April 1990, the renovated hall features jazz Saturday night.

New York soprano Ann Hampton Callaway and Kansas City musicians Wayne Hawkins, Keith Kavanaugh and James Albright control the stage and captivate the crowd.

Throughout the two-hour set, 100 patrons clap and occasionally whoop

to the singer's tribute to Ella Fitzgerald and Hawkins' fingerings on the 9-foot Steinway grand piano.

Meanwhile, cocktail waitresses crouch on the hall's maple so they don't distract audience members.

Pouring Merlot into wine goblets and mixing Scotch and waters, the bartender downstairs voices his views on Nebraska, the nonprofit concert series and the community that sponsors it.

"Nebraska is much more diversified than it is given credit for," he says, preferring not to give his name. "There's always an evolution in Brownville. We've got so many committed people here doing so many wonderful things. Quality, that's what we have here."

"And the most surprising aspect is that we're five miles from the nearest nuclear power plant."

## Canine connection

Down the road in Macy, sights can be unsettling.

## Stepping stones

In Omaha, traffic whizzes along

# Knickerbockers welcomes regional ska bands

BY BRET SCHULTE  
Music Critic

Finally, an evening in Lincoln when thrown elbows and high stepping won't get you thrown out of the bar.

Knickerbockers, 901 O St., is brandishing regional ska acts MU330 and the Bishops for an all-ages show tonight from 6 to 9.

Although ska music might finally be receiving national attention due to such diluted and corporately-enhanced acts like No Doubt (look for its first album) as well as the Top 40 surf ska sounds of Sublime and its eager younger brother, Third Eye Blind - ska has actually been around longer than rock's geriatric Olympians, The Rolling Stones.

Tonight's show bookends the 30-odd years of ska music as a first-wave Omaha group, the Bishops, opens the show and third-wave neofunk fivesome MU330 of St. Louis, Mo., headlines.

Influenced by first-wave Jamaican forefa-

## Concert Preview

thers the Skatelites, the Bishops are intentionally heavy on horns and light on lyrics. Their shows are salted with a relaxed and sometimes ragged reggae sound with an indulgent instrumental style of old-school class. Although their sets rarely manage to spin the crowd beyond a few shuffling feet, the Bishops always do a competent job of setting the tone for a brassy evening.

Traveling via air wave, sound wave and ocean wave, ska music flooded Great Britain largely due to second-wave founders The Specials. The Specials melded the reggae-ska sound from the Jamaican music revolution of the '60s (which came promptly on the heels of the drug revolution) with the current British garage punk sound forged from the blue-collar despair of many of Britain's unemployed youth.

American skins and punks of the '80s and

early '90s resurrected the ska sound from the ashes of its predecessors - bands like The Mighty Mighty Bosstones and Rancid have warped power punk rock and ska music into an all new hybrid of horn and guitar. This third wave of ska music is a more aggressive and funk-based force than its progenitors and managed to proliferate untouched by the tentacles of corporate America - until recently.

With the Bosstones' most recent hit and top videos by Goldfinger and Rancid, third-wave ska-punk bands are becoming an increasingly influential presence in popular music. While more and more groups have taken to the bouncing bass, rapid vocals and drug-inspired (as subject matter or by use) lyrics, many of the founders of this reincarnation are still working happily without the aid of corporate labels or radio time.

So is the case with MU330, which has toiled loudly for years on tours and albums and is largely responsible for the popularity of the sound for many Midwestern youths looking for an alternative to the hollow roar of too

many guitar-god ensembles. Because of its frequently young constituency, bands like, and including, MU330 play almost exclusively all-ages shows, allowing its most avid and eager fans an opportunity to see their mentors live.

MU330's most recent tour is in support of its third album, "Crab Rangoon," which is, surprisingly enough, a sweatbox of sarcastic joy, unbridled doubt, irrepressible talent and complete skanking pop funk. Following previous albums like the definitive "Chumps on Parade" and the inchoate and formative release "Press," the newest continues in its unique pulsing vein of irreverence and swing-ska-pop confusion.

Tonight's show promises to be an uncontrollable performance of that same irrepressible vision etched into their albums. Along with the Bishops, the evening will be a horn-skanking event. Call Knickerbockers at 476-6865 for ticket prices.

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NU at Washington 9/20, buy/sell 1-800-281-0753.

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