BATTLE OF THE SAXES

by Mari Lu McGinnis

Whether it was in person or radio time there were bands without number to listen to. I grew up listening to jazz and still have an LP collection. My favorites are the saxophones. Their mellow tones that once enticed me to the dance floor now follow me through my apartment. Some of my faves were John Coltrane and Sonny Rollins, but my heart is with Stan Getz and his tenor sax. The sexy tenor sax. Maybe that's why I voted for Clinton. If he would only practice! Still all the rest of them did and most of them played the alto sax – and sometimes the tenor and baritone too – whatever the muse called for.

Stan Getz duo-ed with Joao Gilberto Brozila, a Brazilian singer, to make a famous recording in March, 1963. It did a little to soothe a distraught generation. The Bossa Nova distracted us for a moment before a generation was lost.

Two of the best Soprano Sax artists were Kenny Davern and Bob Wilber. Dick Gibson, a Denver jazz aficionado, who sponsored jazz weekends at the Broadmoor Hotel in Colorado Springs twenty-five years ago, asked them to attend the one which we attended. You don't forget those happenings. My record is a real treat. So I'll include the soprano sax too. Okay three favorites.

But then there is Paul Desmond, another alto sax player, and one can't leave out Lester Young, who fought four years in WWII and was a lot different when he came back – but still played – at Carnegie Hall actually.

Then Charlie Parker and Sonny Stitt led a shift toward bebop. Atonal music, musicians' music was the rage. Okay – change was in the air. Not so sweet. I'm glad I have that music too. It's my jazz museum. As in the battle of the sexes, there is so much history, so much exciting and interesting change. Who can tell what the coming generations will listen to. What our grandsons and daughters are experiencing in school, in working life, and in marriage or actually, in most cases, living together, will make the battle of the sexes as passé as the battle of the saxes.