LOS ANGELES—A funny thing happened to Gene Norman while he was this city's most popular disk jockey who was on television two hours a day and presenting concerts and operating a nightclub at night. He started a jazz label.

That was 21 years ago this month. Today, his GNP-Crescendo catalog contains some 1000 records—exploring some of the truly historic live performances by Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie and other giants. He recalls, "But then I got the bug to own my own label. I still have that bug."

He digged the old things, like the memorable Jack Hylton and Ambrose orchestras of London, the trad bands of Reinhardt, Paris and tittis like Earl Hines, Teddy Wilson, Roy Eldridge, "‘The Lion’ Smith and Sidney Bechet. But his catalog also contains excellent contemporary masters by Thelonious Monk, Milt Jackson, Alt Ayler, Wayne Shorter and Gillespie.

For all his emphasis on jazz, however, Norman admits that the biggest selling albums he's issued is he's are the Moms and Dads, Joe and Eddie and kids of a rock group.

Norman recently made a pure jazz LP with Kay Starr singing celebration of blues, say the critics. The one person believes can make it with jazz Calif. "She's an exceptionally versatile vocalist who can sing blues in one breath and the most up market music in the world in the next," says Norman. "That's why jazz is back. It's a big step up from the banalities of rock. I figure GNP-Crescendo will wind up the biggest label of the 70s. I think the percentage increase in sales, and next year with the economy almost cert-

Norman's name will be around for a while, he suggests. His old son Neil, a film major at UCLA, plays guitar, the Moog synthesizer and sings lead. And his band has recorded several single songs. "But Neil appreciates good jazz, too," says the dad. "It's his gen-

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try interest. GNP-Crescendo, every year holds a label and important smaller label is seeking to present one of its new or uncertainties of the Fall.

Latest showcase confirmations are Capitol's Bob Seger, the Midwest "heavy metal" pioneer who has rare major concert tour with his band. RCA's well-recognized first album with singer and blues guitarist, Robbie Robertson is being featured. Kapp's public performance debut of Randy Edelman, who had two Hot 100 singles from his first 20th Century album.

The Fast growing Canadian dele-
gation to the forum is bringing two acts representing their nation: popular rockers A Foot In Cold Water who are distributed in the U.S. by Elektra. The group's one new single, "Into the Ironustry" by a group of youth guns, Amy and Barbara Strubes.

Jazz saxophonist for his 21st Century album.

Chess Records chose Muddy Waters' birthday (April 4) as the release date of the new Waters LP "The Last Great Hawks in the World." Muddy was accompanied by Paul Butterfield and Curd, and produced by Henry Glover.

GDP Records is marking the 15th anniversary of its founding by the American Recording Association (ACM) in Chicago celebrates its tenth anniversary with a four-day festival at Transitions East. Artists per- formed by Joe Bataan, Muddy Waters, Dickie Rock and Barbara Strubes. The legendary Richard Andrews Sextet, Saturday (10); Joseph Jarman Returns From Exile and Amina & Com- poser, Sunday (11); Tony Martell's "For the Love of Tony Martell" concludes Monday with Richard Andrews Sextet, Sunday (10); and Rasid Sidd-

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the label's biggest—and it's the first album for which Norman has been responsible. In the past, he had handled promotion and sales for ABC Records and Philips Music.

The Forum was started in 1975 by the National Association of Music Merchants, and although he is a native of New York City, launched his label because he wanted to make albums of jazz that could compete throughout Southern California and recording each event for his own label, "At first I leased by concert masters out to Decca. Columbia and Capitol and other labels. I also recorded some other jazz artists. But in the end I decided to go it alone. I still have that bug.”

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