

Our
President,
**Neil
Lantz**



Happy Musical New Year!

During the recent holiday season, I took time to re-read several editions of an early Four Freshmen newsletter, captioned in the name of their fan club at the time, *The Fifth Freshman*. I noted an interesting article by Ross Barbour in 1964 in which he described the development of the group's instrumental approach to complement its great vocal harmonization. That significant evolution in the Freshmen style is also explained in his excellent book, *Now You know the Story of the Four Freshmen* (beautiful coffee table copies of which are available in the Music Mart).

The Freshmen blending of vocal and instrumental techniques began shortly after their first professional gig in September, 1948. Describing the origin of the blend, Ross wrote in the 1984 *Fifth Freshmen*, "September 20, 1948, we opened at the 113 Club in Fort Wayne, Indiana ... our first professional job. The first week we would play a song, and then we'd sing a song. Our booking agent heard us there and urged us to play while we sang. "If you can do that," he said, "I'll have you working some of the best night clubs in the middle west." That was the goal he set for us... as we rehearsed. It's strange about "goals"...before you reach one, you find you're reaching for a higher one."

The Freshmen followed the advice of their agent, Dick Sheldon. And so it's gone for the past seven decades as we in the FFS and thousands of other fans across the country and around the world have enjoyed and appreciated the wonderful vocal/instrumental blending of our favorite group.

Your continuing interest and support of the guys and the Society is greatly appreciated. I wish you all a very Happy and Musical year ahead.

Thoughts from the Editor

I hope you like Donna's new on-going article "Where Are They Now." I am looking forward to following all of the articles. Also in this edition, we are starting a three-part article by Mark Schlichting. It appears to be a very informative and fun read.

I would like to take this time to wish you all a very prosperous and happy 2020. Another *Fresh* decade to look forward to. In my teen and early twenties (in the 50s) I never thought much about longevity. But I never thought I would see 2000 roll around - much less 2020. Here we all are, in this new decade and still young enough to enjoy The Four Freshmen and The Four Freshmen Society.

Let's make this 2020 Convention one of the best for renewing long time friendships and making new ones. I am looking forward to seeing all of you.

Barb Meyers
Editor.

