

# How I Met The Four Freshmen

by Carmen J Cesa

In 1956, when I graduated the 9th grade, I kept hearing “Graduation Day” over the radio at that time. That’s when I first noticed the group although they had been together for several years.

I began following them and through the years I’ve enjoyed their sound. My wife and I attended the 1995 convention at Sawmill Creek in Huron, OH. We’ve seen them several times in the Cleveland area, lately at “Night Town” and have attended many nearby appearances. They usually ask for a show of hands by members of the Four Freshmen Society and usually there are a few of us waving wildly!

I can recall seeing them at The University of Detroit, Beaver Falls, PA, Sarasota, FL, Toledo, OH, Lakeside, OH, etc. I do not have an opinion as to which of the 26 or so groups I favor. Whichever, I hear the basic sound is there. That’s why The Four Freshmen sound will last forever.

My best story about them was when they were “in concert” at Kent State University, my “Alma Mater” in 1967. They were appearing with Al Hirt. I was able to sign up for the committee and to get myself assigned to be the assistant in the “green room” prior to them going on stage. I met and spoke to each of them and enjoyed the opportunity. Below is the autographed photo.

We are planning now to attend the 2022 Convention in Bay City, MI.



THE FOUR FRESHMEN SOCIETY “ALL-STARS”

## How to Organize a Jam Session

By Dave Blackwell

As many of you know, I have organized and presided over the Jam Session for the Four Freshmen Society Convention for the past several years beginning in 2013 when Marlene Lobsiger and I hosted the convention in Fort Wayne, Indiana. It seemed to me that previous jam sessions wasted a lot of time by asking who wants to perform next and then getting them up to play or sing and ask the combo if they knew a certain song in a key in which the person was able to perform. It took a lot of time for the performer and the combo to agree and perform the song. This procedure made for a long night and for some performers, a less than great presentation because someone didn’t know the song that was requested. Based on that assumption, I decided to get all of that done before hand.

I start by having anyone who wishes to play or sing fill out the registration form what song they want and in what key. Then I find that song in my large computer file or in my fake books or at the library. Once the song is found, it is put in my computer a note at a time. Or, if it already exists, I can take the next step which is to transfer it to the correct key for the performer. My computer program for this is called Band-In-A-Box. You type in the chord symbols and either type or play the melody from a synthesizer keyboard so it appears on the screen with the chords. This is called a lead sheet. Once the music is in the computer it is a simple matter to press a button and change the key. The next step is to print three copies of the music (one for piano, bass, and drum set).

I set a cut-off date and at that time I make a list of all the performers, their instrument or voice and the title of their song. It’s usually one song per person. Then I take that list and make a program order, so everyone knows when they are performing during the evening. I try to vary the performers by instrument and voice so there are not so many of the same kind in a row. Then some special numbers are added. The current and Former Four Freshmen are always welcome to perform as they often have in the past. In recent years I have added an opening

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Please consider registering for the Convention online at [ffs2022.com](http://ffs2022.com)