

Carmel Crowd Captured And Captivated
Performance on January 26, 2008
By Jim Healy

Under the picture of The Four Freshmen in the program here at The Sunset Center it said "Celebrating 60 Years". If you had never heard of them, you'd have thought that these men had found the fountain of youth. And in a way, I think they have. How so? Because the performance of every song is always fresh, man. And that's why 550 people dug it here tonight.

The Freshmen sang four tunes from their "In Session" CD, but as you would expect with this "blue hair" audience, they got their biggest applause for oldies like "Poinciana", "Day By Day", "After You've Gone", and "Blue World". It took a few songs before Curtis' fine trumpet solos got applause, but it was huge when he wailed on "Rain" and "After You've Gone". Curtis did his usual good job of speaking for the group. He said this was the best audience he'd ever seen and then admitted he says that at every show. When Bob could not come up with the name of this venue, Brian suggested it might be The Sunset Medical Center. That got a good laugh.

Curtis asked how many society members were here tonight. I saw only four or five hands raised. If I had known our group would be without a table in the lobby, I would have set one up. It was a missed opportunity. Nevertheless Curtis gave out the world's longest and funniest Four Freshmen website and highlighted the free monthly CD giveaway. Bob said he won it last month.

When Vince did his scatting on "There Will Never Be Another You" and others, the crowd loved it and of course the same was true whenever he whistled. Curtis said he liked it better when they all shared one microphone. He said it was more organic.

Before the break, Greg Stegman was introduced and took a bow. Curtis apologized to him for having to buy his own ticket. At the intermission I heard several folks praising the fine harmonies they had just heard and that seemed to translate into a brisk business at the CD table.

After a delayed standing ovation, (it takes old people longer to get out of their seats) the boys sang "And So Its Over", a song that precludes another encore. My wife Elaine and I think we deserve some credit for The Freshmen's appearance here, we wrote them down as the act we would most like to see here. It worked.

Andy Williams Reveals Similarities to FF

Now doing his shows for the 17th year in Branson, Missouri, at his own Moon River Theater, singer Andy Williams took the audience back to his formative roots as a singer.

"We had moved to Cincinnati, and had a 15-minute radio show at 8 A.M.", he explained. "After the show, I'd head off to high school. Our group had a four part harmony, a sound something similar to The Four Freshmen".

Since Andy turns 81 this year (but can still hit his notes), he was not copying the FF a la The Beach Boys since this quartet actually preceded The Four Freshmen. But it's gratifying to know that his early vocal skills were in tune with our guys.

Mike Collins - San Antonio