

WELL WORTH THE WAIT
(35 years to see the FF)
By Jill Wickham, Maine

In the Fall of 1958, I was introduced to the FF recordings by the Penn State Jazz Club; and then proceed to save my paltry weekly allowances to spend at the campus record store. Albums were \$5.98 at that time! I can still see the beautiful Fall colors on the campus below, with the FF singing "You're All I See" on the small, scratchy record player on my dormitory windowsill!

I would have given ANYTHING to see the FF in person; but, although I was born in Pennsylvania, they were always performing.where I WASN'T! I remained an avid fan, however.

Thirty-five years later, in March of 1993, I was driving east on Route 98 in Destin, FL, when the corner of my eye caught a small, white sandwich board sitting on the roadside of a large parking lot. The red lettering said "The Four Freshmen". Almost out of my control, my car did an immediate left turn and SCREECHED up to the door of a small nightclub called "Claude's Place" (now closed). It was afternoon and the place was dark; but I found one man standing behind the small bar. It was Ray Brown and he was very patient while I shouted 1000 rapid questions at him; and he eventually sold me a pair of tickets.

The FF had been in Atlanta, and on the night of the performance in Destin, the tiny club was packed to a thrilled audience. I grabbed the first front-row chair. Mike Beisner was musical director at that point; and I was very impressed with the group's personality, sense of humor, and ability to perform the original arrangements perfectly. When Mike announced that there existed a "Four Freshmen Society", I felt a bit 'cheated'; but literally knocked over a few chairs getting to Bob Flanagan at intermission. At that time he carried a small black briefcase with a few FFS membership applications in it! (How we have grown since then!) He chuckled as I hollered at him: "I'LL TAKE EVERYONE YOU'VE GOT!"

Since then, I learned that the FF had performed live at Penn State exactly six months before I matriculated there! What a bummer!

However, I have since heard similar stories from FFS friends; and some of the European fans had to wait almost FORTY YEARS to enjoy a live FF concert!

We all agree on one thing, however: It was WELL WORTH THE WAIT!!

ROSS' INVENTIONS

We have a microwave oven. Aren't they great? Ours tells us when the cooking time is up by doing four beeps. At first, I thought it was a Christian microwave because those four beeps are like the beginning of "Onward Christian Soldiers", but then I realized that four big notes the middle of Hava Nigela. How I think we have an Ecumenical microwave.

A cell phone could ring like that, but my grandson changed his so it crows like a rooster.

Do you suppose someday microwave ovens will be sold with choices like that?

His cell phone has a neat little lady in it who says, "You have two new messages and one old message"

What if your microwave oven had a voice?

Maybe it could record your favorite person's voice so it could copy that voice, and say what it has to say in that voice.

Heck! John Wayne could tell you "Your coffee is hot, pilgrim".

Then if you put a sniffer in there, the oven could say, "your oatmeal is hot" [grits, down south]. Or, "your Limburger cheese is ready. You're going to eat that? Peeeyew"!

I think I have taken this too far.

Ross Barbour

ROSS' SILLY DEFINITIONS

LOLLIGAG: What you get when you stick your lollipop too far back

EXTERMINATOR: Arnold Schwarzenegger - He has a different job now, he's a governor.

MOUNTAINEER: The wrong way to get on a horse