

Jazz Group gets crowd into rhythm! The FF entertain crowds all day -

**by Kara Hull, Executive Editor
BOWLING GREEN NEWS**

Dolores Black knows music. The retired University professor from what is now the Human Movement, Sport and Leisure Studies department, has attended countless music performances on campus since she came to BGSU in 1955 as a graduate student. And it's her love of music that forces her to attend University football games, not so much for the athletics, but for the band, she said.

But even Black, with decades of listening experience behind her, was blown away by last night's performance by the jazz group The Four Freshmen. Sponsored by University alumnus and Board of Trustee member Bob Sebo and his wife Karen, the performance was part of this year's jazz week and one of several kick-off events for the latest multi-year fund raising effort - Building Dreams: The Centennial Campaign.

"Of all the years that I have been here, this is the best group ever," Black said. "They are just dynamite. They are terrific."

The Four Freshmen had a crowd of nearly 1,000 laughing, clapping and tapping anything they could through the concert last night in the Union Ballroom. The band used drums, guitar, trumpet, trombone and even the whistling of one group member to craft songs sung in perfect harmony.

The group's "almost Barbershop" style caught the attention of University sophomore Josh Denning who waited for a ticket into the event last night. He saw The Four Freshmen perform yesterday during his Men's Chorus rehearsal and came to the concert to hear more and hopefully purchase one of their CDs. "They were just really cool," Denning said. "To me, that's really impressive to be able to sing and play at the same time."

The Four Freshmen, credited with being the longest-running vocal group, has been through 22 member changes since its founding in 1948 at Butler University. The group earned national attention a few years later when Big Band leader Stan Kenton discovered and promoted the group.

The current group, made up of members Bob Ferreira, Vince Johnson, Brian Eichenberger and Curtis Calderon, sang both new and old numbers at last night's event and joked with the audience about the original recordings, among other things. But humor and antics on stage are all part of who they are, said newest band member Curtis Calderon. "I'm glad you guys are enjoying the jokes as much as we are" Calderon said to an audience exploding with laughter after one of their many jokes last night. "We don't have professional writers or they'd be better. We have to tell jokes between songs to rest our voices - jokes that don't go anywhere."

In addition to last night's concert, The Four Freshmen spent their afternoon hosting clinics for music students interested in vocal and instrumental jazz. The group also performed the first two songs of its set last night with help from BGSU's 19-member Jazz Lab Band.

The opportunity to play with the group was rewarding, said freshman and baritone saxophone player Jessica Simms. "They were really nice and they were good at making us feel like we could work together really well," she said. University senior and tenor saxophone player Matt Baumann agreed. "It was a great experience," he said. "A wholly good experience."

An FFS Fan Story

by Evelyn Searl (FFS MI) Grand Rapids, MI

A good friend and high school classmate from Dearborn, MI visited me in 2001. Upon entering my home, he recognized a familiar sound. A Four Freshmen CD was playing. I learned that he was a big fan and had attended many of their gigs throughout the years. After recounting the fun times of past conventions, I showed him Ross's book, Now You Know. Well, I think he was up all night reading it and had almost finished before he left the next day. I gave him some FFS info and an application to join. He did not.

He visited me again in 2002. I recounted how great the Reston, VA convention was and gave him another application and urged him to join. He did not.

In 2003 I spoke of how much fun Suzanne Dumaw and I had in Orlando plus a side trip later to Cleveland's Nite Town (not far from Dearborn). I implored him to join. He did not.

By now, we knew the next convention would be in Grand Rapids MI. OK, this should do it. I told him he had to join FFS if he wanted to attend the convention. (It's only a 2-hour drive, plus you will hear all this great music.) Hey, he joined. Whew! Being part of the convention committee, I kept watching for his deposit to arrive. It did not. (Talk about a procrastinator!) At zero hour, I called him for his money. We were on the edge of a sellout. He may not get in. Yes - got the money. Pushy me.

Well, to close out this narrative, he had the time of his life listening to the fantastic sounds of the Four Freshmen, Fresh Talk, and becoming reacquainted with several members from the Detroit and Dearborn areas. Being a former bar owner, my friend was very knowledgeable on the entertainment and bar scene in the Detroit area. He really enjoyed talking to Bob Flanigan several times about the Crest Lounge, Alamo and other early spots.

Our last conversation on Wed., May 18, he recounted his trip to Bowling Green, Ohio, April 6 to hear the guys. He said they were "awesome." He also lamented on the fact that there may not be a convention in 2006. He thoroughly read the newsletter! Go figure - See? Now You Know - I had him hooked!

Edward Joel Gerrity
passed away unexpectedly of heart failure
at the age of 67 on May 26, 2005.

P.S. Joel's niece, a 20-some year old from Sedona, AZ had never heard of the Four Freshmen, let alone listened to their music. After listening to several of Joel's CDs, one song kept popping up that seemed appropriate for the occasion. To close Joel's memorial, she played guitar and sang a lovely and poignant rendition of *Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone*. (But, I will.)