

HAVE AMPS - CAN TRAVEL

Dick Baldwin, FFS President

Next time you're on or near the Eastern seaboard, including FFS conventions, save some space to meet Freshmen Soundman Erich Bucholtz. Erich and staff sent out the tunes at Reston, VA, in August '02 in the Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency. He did the same recently (August 24-26) in the Pittsburgh Hilton Ballroom.

And, good Freshmen listeners were impressed with his modern machines. The 19th annual convention bash was the best sound, ever! Bucholtz Productions gets around!

Mr. Bucholtz came to the Society and Freshmen action via Chick Trafford in Greensburg, PA. Most of the Frosh appearances in the Pittsburgh area and surroundings (many) have been soundproofed by Erich. That's how recent Convention Chair Bob Baker scheduled the "Man From Latrobe" to handle the busy, extended, busy Hilton weekend.

Fresh Friend Brian Eichenberger sums it up best - "I know we'll have great sound when Erich's running the board. He has the experience, expertise, and most of all, EARS, to make things sound right." And, if that's the way it is out of Apple Valley, that's the way it is.

Drop back to 1978, Derry Area (PA) High School, for electronics, music and a six-string guitar player - Erich Bucholtz. Turns out that he was a fair player on his instrument, but got hooked on sound equipment and drove a system on the road doing nearby college dates - no performing. Soon, he had business cards printed for **Bucholtz Productions**. By 1993 he did his initial concert for Chick at Greensburg-Salem HS off a local referral. The next year it was into the Palace Theatre in downtown Greensburg with the Freshmen for Sue Trafford's Habitat series.

To date, total sound setups for FF gigs are in the 30-plus range.

"The Freshmen are easy, not hard," is Erich's assessment. "The group is very cooperative. The Reston and Pittsburgh dates were booked way in advance and I knew they would be big ones, enjoyable runs from the studio in Derry (PA) Township.

A 25,000 foot, multi-track recording studio was Erich's long range dream and now it no longer is as he stays current with all of the changing equipment in the business and an ongoing upgrade. He has mobile recording capabilities, also.

"I like all music, but put rap and death metal at the bottom," he says. "Cutting CD's is quite routine, standard stuff. There are much more demanding production challenges. Music, like everything else, is feeling the economy in this part of the country, too. Clubs are closing and that's not good for business."

Erich is on both ends of the music spectrum. He employs the latest electronics in his company and whips off editing in the digital domain, standard analog, plus a touch of experimental components of the future. He works eloquently and fast. Interesting - he bought a vinyl music disc just recently and advises to keep those old turn tables well oiled.

Counting his interest in school and professional plans, the Bucholtz years are starting to add up - three decades of career surround sound. And when he is not setting levels for the Freshmen he devotes business hours with song writers and big bands (nice omen). But, he terms these music hours, days as "unstable." Despite the economic times, he wants to redesign his studio as a more versatile stable for recording.

And, for the record, Bucholtz Productions did the sound for the Sharon, PA Convention at the Radisson, July 17-19, 1997. Were you there for that Hall-Of-Fame weekend?

SOUND BITES:

*Just for the record, Erich has a library of musical memories due to his controlling sound boards for such acts as The Platters, Four Aces, Four Lads, Ink Spots, Bon Jovi, Bill Cosby, Steve Wright, Harry Belafonte, Kenny G, a young Vince Gill, Spitfire Band, regional Symphony orchestras, plus a bunch of big bands.

*The Kenton-Shearing-Frosh discs hum at Frosh reunions.

*Thanks Eric for the best 2006 Fresh Talk session, yet.

*Back of every sound board is a cool type - EB on pots (as they used to say in the music biz).

Sound Off FFS For The Pres & CEO

Bucholtz Productions

Good Show, Eric!