

The Freshmen at Franklin, NC

By Preston Stevens

We really loved the venue and the concert on September 1st in Franklin, NC. The house was not completely full, possibly because it was a later booking and there was no mention in the local media. Franklin is a large mountain town with a lot of seniors so many fans missed the show. The crowd was enthusiastic and stood during the last two numbers. There was a lot of energy in the audience and on the stage. The new guys have a special zing that I love. Tommy is responsible for a lot of the crispness I remember hearing with Flan. Jon has certainly come into his own. Marian and I later said to him "Curtis Calderon move over!" Stein is keeping up the Comstock legend and had a couple of long solos which the crowd much appreciated. I spoke with Bob and showed him a photo I took of him at the 1992 gig in Rock Hill, South Carolina. The guys all loved it because Bob had a full head of hair!

The next day we were re-hashing with a friend who asked Marian and me to name the three favorite songs we heard. We couldn't agree on any, they were all so terrific. Then **Route 66** was mentioned and that got our enthusiastic agreement!

WHERE DO MY MEMBERSHIP DUES GO?

Annual membership dues are required for membership in the Four Freshmen Society (FFS). Here's how your dues are used:

- Not for labor :) The FFS is all volunteers. No one is paid to do Society work; there's no paid staff.
- *Fresh News* Newsletter is published quarterly and is full of information and member stories to help members learn about the upcoming convention, Four Freshmen gigs, latest CD releases, to gain access to the Merchandise Mart, and so much more.
- We honor 10- and 20-year contiguous memberships by special lapel pin.
- A mailing list is maintained for the newsletter and other mailings to FFS members. All mailing expenses are paid by the FFS.
- As an FFS member, you gain access to the annual FFS convention, organized and put on by a committee of volunteers. The annual meeting offers a bonding —the Four Freshmen— and fans from all over the world!
- The FFS often purchases items for the Freshmen -- clothing and sometimes instruments and cases, replacements for damaged items, publicity photographs and posters.
- The FFS pays travel/housing expenses to the annual FFS Convention for the Four Freshmen.
- Four Freshmen recordings on CDs are usually produced by the FFS.
- Transition expenses for bringing new Freshmen into the group are paid by the FFS.

Your annual dues of \$25 (or \$20/year when renewing for multiple years at once) stretch far beyond what's listed above in benefits and expenses. As a FFS member, you are part of the greatest fan club in the world for a group of hard working, skilled and talented young men who, after 70 years, continue to perform one of the greatest historical legacies in American music!

You can renew your membership at any time by going to dues.fourfreshmensociety.com; please do!

The Four Freshmen On the Wings of Song

by Gil Petersen

When I was submitting this article for the last edition of *Fresh News*, I learned from Barb Meyers, our editor, that Bob Ferreira had already submitted an eloquent article about the May 25th concert in Roseburg, Oregon. So, it was decided to hold my article for this edition.

Bob's article was extremely complimentary and though I don't think I deserve his accolades, I am deeply appreciative for his very kind words. Through the years, I have been fortunate to have maintained a very special relationship with the Freshmen. I have thoroughly enjoyed hosting them each time they have performed here in Roseburg. Their visits have always been delightful and memorable in every way. I will cherish this relationship forever and beyond. Thank you Group 25. You were simply outstanding as always.

The Freshmen arrived at Roseburg's newest hotel, The Hampton Inn, on May 24th. They took a few moments to settle in and put away their gear. Then we were off to Lynn Engle's beautiful hillside home overlooking the Umpqua Valley. Lynn, a Four Freshmen Society member, hosted the guys for a lovely dinner, highlighted by perfect cocktails and tender fillet mignon. Lynn also surprised Tommy with a special dish since he is a vegetarian. What a lovely evening; even the weather was perfect.

On Friday the 25th, I met the Freshmen at the hotel and we proceeded to Umpqua Community College to conduct a masters' class. Jason Heald, the Music Director at the College, directs a group known as the Umpqua Singers who perform modern jazz vocal harmony. Jason is one of the most creative persons I have ever known. Not only does he write the group's arrangements, but he also writes numerous original compositions they perform. The Freshmen did several songs for them and then had the Umpqua Singers perform. The Freshmen then critiqued the group with some well put suggestions and encouragement. It was also interesting watching them teach and communicate so easily with these students. Very Impressive!

After the masters' class, we had lunch and proceeded to the venue location for a sound check. We were in Bill and Patti Woods' corporate hangar. Being a pilot for over fifty years, I have been in numerous hangars. However, I must say, I have never been in a hangar that was so pristine that you could, in fact, eat off the floor. Inside the closed hangar, facing the stage, was a gorgeous Falcon 10 Jet. Facing the jet was Patti's futuristic Lexus 500lc...one of the most beautiful vehicles I have ever seen. What a setting!!!!

The evening started with a wonderful classically trained guitarist, Charley Thompson, who entertained us through the social hour. Next, The Jazz Insiders performed. They are a marvelous local Jazz quartet that includes Jason Heald, and they were simply superb. We are incredibly fortunate to have such amazingly talented individuals here in our community.

I introduced the Four Freshmen, as I have done so many times in the past, as "the number one jazz vocal harmony group in the history of the music industry." Group 25 performed flawlessly. The audience was totally mesmerized by the iconic sounds of the Freshmen. Some of the younger audience members attending had never heard of the Four Freshmen. I think we acquired a number of new fans that evening from the comments I heard from them.

During the second set, they performed a song that I had requested. Greg Stegeman wrote the arrangement and the Freshmen did a masterful rendering of this emotionally sensitive musical jewel written by Paul Williams and Kenny Ascher. I don't think anyone breathed while they were performing this haunting ballad. There was just no oxygen left in the room when they finished. This was the first time they had performed this song in a concert. I think they were planning to include this song in one of their sets at the convention this year. So, perhaps you have heard ***With One More Look At you***. If so, I don't think you will soon forget it

Best Fresh wishes to all!