

Erich Bucholtz (continued from page 3)

program built into them. We don't hear it because it's not that apparent except to a trained ear. I want the mix to be big and full."

Erich now uses digital mixing consoles. At the end of the show, he can save the mix: all the levels of the microphones, the tonal controls, the special effects and the equalization of all the sounds up front. He ends up with a footprint that he can use every time he does a Four Freshmen show. He puts a jump drive in his console, and the whole console changes to what he really likes for The Four Freshmen. The guys can come out and perform with no worry about what it sounds like up front.

The convention in Denver was hands-down the best sound Erich claims he has ever had with The Four Freshmen (Group #25: Bob Ferreira, Jon Gaines, Stein Malvey, Tommy Boynton). He says, "I could not have been happier with the sound — the volume was low but it was like the guys were sitting right next to you. It was haunting, it was so good. A fellow came up to me and profusely complimented me on the vocal mix. I found out he was Ralph Dickerson, a trumpet player for Earth, Wind and Fire."

Erich goes on, "We do a lot of big bands. We are currently working with Lords of 52nd Street — Billy Joel's band. When I do a show with them, I put their jump drive in the console and get their unique results."

The Four Freshmen have their multitude of hits, and they have to do those songs the same way. No matter who is playing up there, Bob Flanigan is sitting back to make sure the new guys are worthy of the name.

"Young people need to be introduced to that kind of music and appreciate the content of what these guys are doing. This new group is very innovative and they're trying new techniques to charge it up a bit. Musicianship back 75 years ago was completely different from today. Young people may not even know who The Four Freshmen are. They have every type of musical instrument at their digital disposal."

"I am so fortunate and blessed to be at this point in my life," says Erich. "I have been all over the country, met amazing people and got to experience new things. My dad used to say, 'Son, if you don't like the picture you see, paint a new one.' At this stage I look back and see I have painted a lot of good pictures, and they always involve mixing sound — every genre of sound."

He definitely plans to be a part of the upcoming 75th Anniversary Convention in Fort Wayne. As Erich puts it, "I am really an extension of The Four Freshmen — I am the Fifth Freshmen, whose only job is to refine and present the musicians to the audience with the best possible sound."

The Four Freshmen: Free Public Concert in Milton, WI

By Samara Kalk Derby | Wisconsin State Journal

Jim Shy, of Milton, who brought the six-time Grammy-nominated band The Four Freshmen to his hometown Saturday night for a free concert, was pleased with the event.

"It was beautiful. It went really well," said Shy, who turned 84 on Sunday.

He said about 150 people showed up at the Milton High School auditorium including Milton Mayor Anissa Welch.

"People came up, I didn't even know who they were and they thanked me for putting it on," Shy said.

He was so worried he wouldn't fill the auditorium's 748 seats that he bought a \$100 ad in the Wisconsin State Journal on Wednesday.

"Not everybody is interested and won't take the effort to even go to something (that's free), but a lot of people came and talked to me about it," he said Monday morning.

Shy, a retired engineer, discovered the vocal jazz harmony group online two years ago and thought, "Man, those guys are really great."

He said the concert was a gift to Milton, which is 40 miles southeast of Madison.

Shy wouldn't say how much it cost to hire the quartet. "It's not that much," he said last week. "See, I have a lot of money in the stock market and the stock market is so crazy. Sometimes I lose more money in one day than this whole concert cost."

The Four Freshmen were founded in 1948 at Butler University in Indianapolis and toured the world. They take after 1940s- and '50s-era groups such as The Four Aces and The Modernaires.

The last original member retired in 1993, but the group continues to tour internationally. In 1999, the group played at the old Madison Civic Center, where the Overture Center is now, and tickets were \$23 and \$16.

Shy, who six months ago lost his wife of 57 years, said his three daughters and many of his grandchildren attended the concert.

The mayor introduced the group and stayed for the show. "There's a picture of me and the mayor. I told her we were going to put the picture in the paper and say with a caption 'mayor gets a new boyfriend.'"



Jim Shy with Milton Mayor Anissa Welch, who introduced The Four Freshmen on Saturday night.



The Four Freshmen played Milton Saturday in a gift for the community.