

Freshmen Music Clinic for Grade Schoolers

by Ann Smith (N. TX Rep)

During the convention, as if they weren't already busy enough, the Freshmen found time to conduct a music clinic for several hundred school children in Bowling Green. It was attended by grades five through kindergarten - plus fifth graders from an additional four schools were bussed in. The Freshmen invited audience participation by having the kids raise their hands when the singing went from unison to harmony - then lowering their hands again during unison passages. This worked well to get the kids involved and keep their attention. When asked what was the difference between the first song and the second one, one child said that the second one had a test (raising their hands during harmony parts) and the first song didn't have a test.

This hand-raising really caught on and sometimes hands would be raised just because those around them were raised - whether they understood the question or not. This was particularly true for the younger kids, especially the kindergartners. For example, the Freshmen explained each of the instruments they play. When they demonstrated the stick bass, Bob asked how many of the children had ever played one. A number of hands went up - and the teacher sitting next to me said, tongue in check, "I doubt that any of them have ever even seen one before." I know I had never seen one before seeing the Freshmen perform with one - and I even play the string bass.

Some of the questions the children asked were interesting. They asked if the Freshmen all lived together - which, of course, was answered "No" - they all live separately. The children also asked who was the oldest and who was the youngest. They guessed the oldest one correctly: Bob. He explained that he and Vince are both 31 - and that he is the older of the two. The kids were way off when guessing the youngest. They thought Vince was the youngest. It was explained to them that Brian is the youngest, at 25, and Curtis is next at 26. Can you believe that Bob and Vince are the "old men" of the group now - and barely in their thirties!

The Freshmen usually conduct music clinics for high school or college groups - and some junior high or middle school students. Let's hope they get these age groups as hooked on the Four Freshmen as we are, in order to keep this fabulous music alive for another few hundred years. After all, Bach was born in 1685 - and would probably be dumbfounded to know that his music has survived for over 300 years. Surely that never occurred to him when he was writing all his music. Who would have dreamed, when the Freshmen formed their group in 1948, that the Four Freshmen would still be going strong after 53 years. Here's wishing them a happy 100th anniversary and many more beyond that!



The Freshmen conduct a music clinic at a grade school in Bowling Green during the convention. L-R: Bob, Vince, Brian, and Curtis



The Freshmen entertain and teach the school children, grades 5 through Kindergarten, at the music clinic in Bowling Green.

Season's Greetings

The following poem from John Bangs is a gem! FFS officers, directors, trustees are all very grateful for the many cards and good wishes we have received in December. Thank you all for thinking of us. We wish everyone **PEACE!**

*My Holiday Message
by John Bangs (WI)*

*Christmas cards arrive many and fast
I'm the SCROOGE of Christmas past
I know this may be a rarity
Alas, card/stamp money went to charity.*

Merry Christmas to all.