

# Entertainment Guide



by Allan Jones

## SPECTRUM IN BLUE

### The Fifth Dimension

Success is something that comes naturally to The Fifth Dimension because they have caught the vibrations of their generation, and beat to its rhythm.

They ushered in the new decade of the '70's with their hit record, "The Age of Aquarius/Let The Sun Shine In", winning them Grammy Awards for Best Contemporary Vocal Performance by a group and Best Record of the year, as well as nominations for Best Arrangement and Best Engineered Recording. Their "Aquarius" album was also nominated as Album of the Year. And no wonder. The single hit Number One on the charts and sold 1,500,000 copies in its first six weeks. At the Grammy Awards held in May, the single was named Best Record of the Year!

From the day they started as a group in 1967, The Fifth Dimension was destined for the top. While trying to decide on a record to start out with, Marc Gordon, their personal manager, introduced them to an unknown writer who told them of a song he had written that day. The writer was Jim Webb, and the song was "Up, Up and Away". The title of that song pointed the direction their career would take.

The song won four Grammy awards, sold countless copies and became the title of their first highly successful album. The Fifth Dimension immediately took their place at the top in the music world.

The two women and three men who make up the group, Marilyn McCoo, Billy Davis, Jr., Florence LaRue Gordon, Ron Townson and Lamonte McLemore, started out under the name of "The Versatiles" until they were introduced by Marc Gordon to Johnny Rivers, founder of Soul City Records, who suggested that they change their name. It was Ron Townson who thought of "The Fifth Dimension", which met with instant agreement by everyone.

### MARILYN MCCOO

Although born in New Jersey, Marilyn McCoo, is really a product of Los Angeles where she was brought up as the daughter of a prominent physician. According to her father, Marilyn could sing even before she could talk, and as a child determined that show business would be her life's work.

Her unusually rich voice has a four octave range which contributes a great deal to the quality of The Fifth Dimension.

### BILLY DAVIS, JR.

Billy is the most volatile member of the group. He is impetuous, humorous and optimistic, and a never failing pick-me-up when the spirits of the other members fail. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, Billy worked at a number of odd jobs until he saved enough money to open his own cocktail lounge which he planned to use as an entertainment workshop. He experimented with vocal groups and developed a knack for staging and sound.

Billy's search for his right niche ended when he became one of The Fifth Dimension group, where he also found the love of his life in his marriage to Marilyn McCoo.

### FLORENCE LARUE GORDON

A native of Glenside, Pennsylvania, Florence started early in life with a musical education. As a child, she studied dancing and violin. After the family settled in Los Angeles, she sought means of entering the field of entertainment while attending college. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education at California State, Los Angeles, and did student teaching in the area.

It was on a photographic assignment that she met Lamonte McLemore, and was asked to join a group he was forming. With her happy marriage to Marc Gordon, a new-born son to look after, and a great deal of professional satisfaction in her work with the group, there is little chance of Florence returning to teaching, although she would like to in the distant future.

### RON TOWNSON

Ron owes a great deal to his grandmother, who had great faith in his musical talent, which she recognized in his earliest years. Ron started singing when he was six years old, and his mother and father arranged for him to have private singing and acting lessons.

It was a reunion with his two St. Louis pals in Los Angeles which led to his joining with them in the formation of The Fifth Dimension.

### LAMONTE McLEMORE

Lamonte is the only unmarried member of the group, and the only one who discovered his talent for music comparatively much later in his life. His original ambition was to become a professional baseball player which ended with a broken arm. Instead, he found success as a professional photographer, and his pictures have appeared in such leading magazines as Life, Harper's Bazaar, Ebony and Elegant.

His meeting with his old St. Louis friends, Billy Davis, Jr. and Ron Townson, in Los Angeles decided his future course of action when he found that his voice was a natural blend with theirs for the formation of The Fifth Dimension.

It will be interesting to see if the vocal quality of the group will be maintained now that Marilyn McCoo and her Billy Davis decided to strike out on their own.

### THE 4-H ENSEMBLE "Freedom and Fashions" \*\*\*

Sunday afternoon wasn't just a typical Sunday for the teen-age members of the 4-H Ensemble. Nor for the organizers of it, under the directorship of Ira Mumford. It was to be their first social function of the year. Although the 4-H club receives funding for their program, they must still be aggressive in raising some funds for activities they wish to pursue, which may not be in their allocation. For an example: last year they toured the bay area, San Francisco, Oakland and Sacramento, along with a Bicentennial concert in Canada. So consequently its imperative that they have social activities to support their functions. Sunday was no exception. Only members of the Troupe did the modeling, with the exception of Michael Tims and his son Jason and Terry Tims with his son billed as Little T. An added attraction was "Rose City Men of Harmony". A thirty man singing aggregation that put you in the mind of the old barber shop quartets around the turn of the century. There are twelve members of the 4-H Ensemble: Princess Funchess, Florida McDonald, Sonja Tucker, Lisa McConnell, Teresa Hardy, Iretta Mumford, Edie Thrower, Royce Hardy, Gary Morris, Charles Hardy, Walter Tucker and Kenny Williams. A job well done!!!

### WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ENTERTAINMENT

- January 12th-31st - Ramada Inn presents The Command Performance.
- January 15th-31st - The Point Denim presents Southern Flavor.
- January 28th - The Paramount Northwest presents Arlo Guthrie.
- Market Place presents Tom Albering Quartet with Nancy King on vocals, Tuesday through Saturday.
- The Helm presents Jeannie Hoffman and David Friesen jazz pianist and bass, Tuesday through Saturday.
- The Prima-Donna presents Andre Grand Trio - playing soft jazz.

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Dr. Billy Taylor is the music co-host for the 1976 Black Journal. On each edition of the series, he will discuss Black contributions to American musical history and perform with a four-man combo. Produced by WNET/13, New York, and distributed nationally by the Public Broadcasting Service, Black Journal is seen locally on Mondays at 10:30 p.m. on KOAP-TV. Black Journal is produced with the assistance of a grant from Pepsi-Cola Company.

## Billy Taylor provides Black Journal music

The diplomas read "Dr. William E. Taylor," but to the new appreciative audiences he's brought to the wonders of jazz, it's Billy Taylor. Formerly music director of "The David Frost Show," Taylor is entering his second year at Black Journal as music director and music co-host for the series. On each edition of the public television series he discusses Black contributions to American music and demonstrates with his own combo, paying tribute to such jazz greats as Duke Ellington, Art Tatum and Fats Waller, among others.

"I was the first to make the statement that jazz is classical music," he has said. "I don't consider it Black classical music, but American classical music. Black music has contributed much more to the culture of this country than many of us realize. All of the popular music had its origins in the same kind of musical experience that gave us the spirituals, the blues, and of course, jazz."

A versatile jazz pianist, composer, arranger, teacher, and even an actor (Taylor appeared as "Wesley" in *The Times of Your Life*), Taylor has written more than 300 songs, a dozen books on

the art of jazz piano, and made over thirty recordings (he has referred to some of them as "the best kept secrets in jazz").

Taylor has become one of the elder statesmen of jazz, serving as a member of the National Council on the Arts, the New York State Commission of Cultural Resources, the board of ASCAP (The American Society of Composers and Publishers), and the New York City Cultural Council. Since its beginning in 1965, he has served as President and principal fund-raiser of "Jazzmobile," a program that brings name artists and their music into the inner cities of more than fifteen American towns.

A gifted lecturer, Billy Taylor also has brought jazz into classrooms in high schools and colleges all over America. Recently, he received his doctorate in musicology from the University of Massachusetts and he has taught at the Manhattan School of Music, C.W. Post College, Columbia and Yale University.

In the 1960's, in addition to his nightclub dates and concert appearances Billy Taylor became a popular disc jockey on Harlem's WLIB. A few years later, he

became general manager of WLIB, one of New York's only Black-owned radio stations. He was a charter member of the Inner City Broadcasting Corporation, as well as the Black Communications Corporation. He also has his own corporation, Billy Taylor Productions, which produce radio and television commercials, records, and concerts.

In 1969, Billy Taylor became the first Black music director of a major television series, *The David Frost Show*, which he has performed to a whole new audience, as "O.K., Billy!" became the cue with which Frost began each program.

Taylor's own compositions include "Suite for Jazz Piano and Orchestra," which he has performed with the Oakland and Minnesota Symphonies; and "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free," which has become one of the theme songs of the civil rights movement.

Billy Taylor is not new to public television. He has appeared on several specials and his music has been featured on both *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*. Black Journal now has the benefits of his talents.

## Austerity brings rapid health breakdown

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county had no health program at all, though now they've been able to restart some services...

Multnomah County lost its health education program: "education is always the first to go." Ms. Percival explained: "The tax base is deteriorating - the unemployed simply can't pay the cost - and of course the situation snowballs." While hospital and medical costs have gone up (a fifteen percent increase in hospital room costs last year in Oregon), real wages nationally went down last year 22 percent. Last year there were 842 reported cases of Hepatitis A (infectious) and 302 cases of Hepatitis B (contaminated needles); of the 842 cases infectious Hepatitis A, 132 were in Portland. The strain which 5,000 Portland diners were subjected to had limited effect only because of the relative good state of health of Oregon's population.

### PLAGUE

New York City's rat control has been cut by 34 percent - along with other drastic cuts in social services which were a result of the eventual executive capitulation not to hold to a Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the City: paying off the debt rather than maintaining social services. Just over a month ago Oregon's media broadcast plague warnings for parts of Oregon. Bob Gresbrink of the State Vector Control said warning was actually due to a better method in detecting plague that has been in the western part of the state all along (tracing the pathogens in the predators of the rodents which carry the disease).

The last outbreak of plague in the U.S. was in 1920 in Los Angeles. Though there were only about a dozen cases of the plague in the U.S. last year, one of them was apparently in Oregon. A man skinning a rabbit on the West Coast was assumed to have been bitten by a bubonic plague-carrying flea. Dr. Googins explained that silvatic plague "has troubled Indian populations in New Mexico - various kinds of ground squirrels, prairie dogs," and rabbits are hosts to the silvatic (another name for bubonic) plague. Rats are the main carrier of plague. According to Gresbrink of the State Vector Control (Vector - an organism that transmits a pathogen), the rat population is not decreasing. John Alderton of the Country Vector Control explains: "There's some 1,400 miles of sewers in Portland - there are rats all through them." In the last ten to fifteen years there has been an increase in the rat population due to the use of garbage grinders and the disposing of garbage through the sewer system. Alderton notes that the greatest rat population is in S.E. Portland: "And you get more rain, more rats - sewer system

breakdown, more rats." The situation is comparable to 125 or more other cities in the U.S. In addition to the potential carriers of plague, the rats transmit leptospirosis via urine (Weils Disease), which when a victim is healthy is experienced as headache, chills, fever, and an affected liver - similar to varieties of influenza.

Plague, as other diseases, feast on populations whose protein intake is low. Protein is essential to maintain the body's immunological processes. Similarly sanitation, sewage, adequate housing, clothing, education: social services that are being seriously threatened in President Ford's \$70 billion budget cut proposal, while the President's move for austerity is matched by the Democrats' call for "New Deal" austerity. Epidemiologist Dr. John Googins, asked what effect the budget cuts in health programs might have, responded: "I'm not prepared to comment on things like that - it's really not my area of expertise."

Other epidemiologists have stated that the problem of rampant disease and ecological destruction in the Third World is linked to the rapid breakdown of the productive capacity in the advanced

sector and both must be turned around immediately or "worldwide human ecology will reach a point of unstopable, total collapse." These scientists, arguing for a moratoria on dollar debt and the restarting of international production (new world economic order) state: "Once the world passes the point where the critical cases for reversing social breakdown are destroyed - food-producing areas wracked by disease and pestilence or municipal services so deteriorated that health conditions in the advanced sector approach those of the Third World - it will be too late."

## ACLU charges Molalla

The ACLU Foundation of Oregon (ACLU) filed suit on January 28th, 1976 in the U.S. District Court to enjoin enforcement of the ban on political speakers at Molalla Union High School adopted by the Molalla School Board on December 11th, 1975.

Plaintiffs in the suit are Dean Wilson, the teacher whose invitation to a member of the Communist Party to speak to his class in government caused protests from a segment of the community which resulted in the ban on political speakers; Vera Logue, and eleventh grade student at Molalla Union High School enrolled in Wilson's class; and Mary Logue, mother of Vera Logue and a taxpayer resident of the Molalla Union High School District.

Defendants are Rose Chancellor, Chan Bunke, Harold Wood, Charles E. Tyler, and Raymond Sether, members of the Molalla Union High School District Board of Directors.

The ACLU alleges that the action of the board in banning all political speakers from the high school violates the rights of free speech, academic freedom and equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

It claims that Wilson has for many years provided his students in government and political science with the opportunity to hear differing political viewpoints first-hand from persons who hold them, inviting speakers representing a cross-section of political thought in contemporary American society, and that this method of teaching is accepted by professionals as an effective means of teaching a course designed to prepare high school students for the responsibilities of American citizenship. Wilson is said to have had a Republican, a Democrat, and a member of the John Birch Society, among others, speak to the class during the 1975-76 school year.

The board, after examining Wilson's curriculum, had approved on November 13th, 1975 the appearance of Anton Krehmarek, a Community, before the class, subject to the following conditions:

1. that plaintiff Wilson prepare the students by teaching his unit on Communism before the speaker's appearance.
2. that the students be shown the film "Nightmare in Red."
3. that two anti-Communist speakers be scheduled, one before and one after Mr. Krehmarek, and that one of the two anti-Communist speakers be from a Communist country, and
4. that students not wishing to hear the Communist speaker, be excused from the class.

ACLU claims that the December 11th action of the board, reversing their November decision and banning all political speakers was "an attempt to make their action appear to be non-discriminatory."

The court is asked to declare the ban unconstitutional and grant preliminary and permanent injunctions prohibiting interference with Wilson's inviting speakers of differing political viewpoints, including the Communist viewpoint, to speak to his classes.

ACLU Cooperating Attorneys Don H. Marmaduke and Larry K. Amburgey are representing plaintiffs.

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