

LAFAYETTE - WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

Returning to Rock

After 30 years, FOX reunites to plug in and play

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It was 30 years ago when a band of Purdue University graduates decided to call it quits.



(Photo provided)
Fox, seen here in 1973, made a name for itself in Lafayette in the 1970s playing originals and covers and opening for bands including Styx and REO Speedwagon. Now, 30 years later, they have reunited. George Brenn (left to right), Gerry Bishop, David Owen and Mark Sloan make up the rock band Fox.

FOX had made a regional name for itself with its mix of jam-friendly originals and classic-rock covers from 1972 to 1976. The four-piece of drummer George Brenn, guitarist Mark Sloan, guitarist David Owen and bassist Gerry Bishop was the go-to Lafayette band to open for visiting superstars including Styx, REO Speedwagon and Canned Heat.

The four young men started families and careers after Fox. Bishop is an attorney in Merrillville. Owen is a computer-aided drafting teacher, and Brenn owns a landscaping business, and Sloan is now an area manager for AT&T special services. Pretty soon, the years were flying by as the guys, who used to live together as well as play rock 'n' roll almost every day, lost touch.

Sloan admitted playing music in front of the crowd is the most addicting force he has encountered. "The ego factor of being able to get the crowd to respond and enjoy the music, the interaction the group has and the effect music has on the crowd You feel like you're one with the crowd," Sloan said. "You miss the party atmosphere. I don't think we're reclaiming our youth. I don't think we're trying to relive a certain time in our lives. We just love to play music. We enjoy just practicing and jamming. It's fun to play."

"It's a real rush just getting in front of people," Sloan said. "The larger the crowd, the better we play. You just get into it more yourself. It's a huge ego boost and a ton of fun."

Brenn believes FOX's chemistry started early on, and it made playing together easier and more fun. Brenn said the amount of shows Fox played helped support themselves through Purdue. In 1972, Fox played more than 100 gigs. Over 30 years later, Brenn said Fox has not lost a step. He calls the bandmates' relationship a "musical brotherhood." "It's pretty astonishing," Brenn said. "After just a few songs, the chemistry was still there."