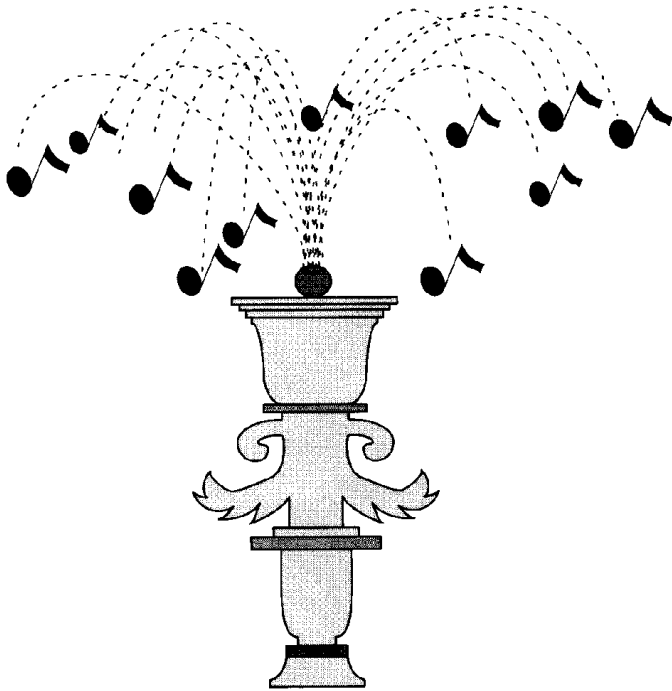


Fountain of Youth

BY JAY MAXWELL



**Knowing what to play at
class reunions has a magical effect.**

When I go to a movie, I often enjoy watching the coming attractions more than the feature. Knowing what movies are forthcoming gives me a hint as to what music I'll be playing three, six or nine months down the road. A few months ago, I saw a preview for "Grease." Initially, I thought it was a remake with new stars and 1990s' technology. When I saw bobby-soxed Olivia Newton-John and a greasy, young John Travolta, I knew it was the original. Why would they bring back a movie that was popular 20 years ago?

The latest remake of "Titanic" (I think it's the fifth) has become the biggest moneymaker of all time. "Star Wars" celebrated the same success two years ago when it put a fresh coat on the sci-fi trilogy. These remakes drew millions. Why? People love to step back into the good old days... or, at least, what we perceive were the good old days. While I watched the preview for "Grease," the memories that rushed in were not about the movie, but about what I was doing at the time of its original release.

Reunions, especially high school reunions, are America's fountain of youth. Why do we so enjoy getting together with people we haven't seen in years? Is it to see who has lost the most hair or who has had the most kids? Yes. But are these the main reasons people come to their high school reunion? No. They come to relive their youth. They want to feel 18 again. One of the main ingredients to the formula of youth is the right music. Re-releasing hit movies is a recent trend, but playing hit music from a certain time period to relive one's youth is time-tested.

DR. DJ, WITCHDOCTOR

At a reunion, it is your job to mix up just the right potion of magic. If you play too many songs from their high school days, you will get complaints from your patients, with comments like, "We may be old, but we aren't dead." On the other hand, if you stir in an abundance of new music, the anticipated magic of youth won't be conjured.

Different "patients" require different strengths of the youth potion. Some desire a small spoonful of the "oldies." Others want a gallon of the brew. A good rule of thumb is to play more of the songs from their graduating year earlier in the evening and weaken the oldies ingredient as the night progresses. Also, keep the volume at a conversational level during the early part of the evening. As the evening progresses, bring the volume up.

The more you know about the class's reunion and its itinerary, the easier your job. Some reunions last an entire weekend. Others may begin on Friday night

with a more intimate gathering at a restaurant or banquet hall. There may or may not be any music for this night. This would be a night for them to catch up on their classmate's lives since they last met. There might also be a picnic on Saturday or Sunday afternoon with more time for socializing.

If you know in advance how much time the classmates will have had to get reacquainted, you'll be able to plan accordingly. The rule of thumb is: The longer they have had to talk, the sooner you should start the dance music.

You should know in advance if the class will have a picnic, and whether or not you will be expected to make announcements or assist with activities.

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PROMOTE, OF COURSE

A great way to get the guests involved and to leave a lasting impression of you and your DJ company is to create a list of hit songs (like the accompanying lists) from the year they graduated and place a few copies on each table. Include your company name, logo, and phone number on the sheet. The guests will use this list to request certain songs and many will take the list home as a keepsake. The next time they need a DJ, they will remember you and will give you a call first.

If there is a fountain of youth, it can be found at a high school reunion. The person mixing the age-warping spirits isn't the bartender, it's the DJ. So when you play at your next reunion, create the magic, spin the music. *(continued on page 55)*



Jay Maxwell owns and operates Jay Maxwell's Music by Request in Charleston, South Carolina.

TOP 20 SONGS FOR A CLASS OF 1978 REUNION

TITLE ARTIST

1. Stayin' Alive Bee Gees
2. I Will Survive Gloria Gaynor
3. Always And Forever Heatwave
4. Wonderful Tonight Eric Clapton
5. Le Freak Chic
6. Just The Way You Are Billy Joel
7. Got To Be Real Cheryl Lynn
8. Three Times A Lady Commodores
9. Night Fever Bee Gees
10. Hot Legs Rod Stewart
11. Last Dance Donna Summer
12. Macho Man Village People
13. MacArthur Park Donna Summer
14. Copacabana Barry Manilow
15. Boogie Oogie Oogie Taste Of Honey
16. You're In My Heart Rod Stewart
17. Paradise By The Dashboard Lights Meatloaf
18. Get Off Foxy
19. You're The One That I Want John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John
20. Hopelessly Devoted To You Olivia Newton-John

TOP 20 SONGS FOR A CLASS OF 1988 REUNION

TITLE ARTIST

1. Push It Salt-N-Pepa
2. Loco-motion Kylie Minogue
3. Wild Wild West Escape Club
4. I'll Always Love You Taylor Dayne
5. It Takes Two Rob Base
6. (I've Had) The Time Of My Life Bill Medley/ Jennifer Warnes
7. Pink Cadillac Natalie Cole
8. Da Butt E.U.
9. Groovy Kind Of Love Phil Collins
10. Pump Up The Volume M/A/R/R/S
11. She's Like The Wind Patrick Swayze
12. Simply Irresistible Robert Palmer
13. Just Got Paid Johnny Kemp
14. One More Try George Michael
15. The Way You Make Me Feel Michael Jackson
16. Need You Tonight INXS
17. Roll With It Steve Winwood
18. Never Gonna Give You Up Rick Astley
19. So Emotional Whitney Houston
20. What's On Your Mind (Pure Energy) Information Society