



FROM THE DESK OF JOHN SAMPEN

“It was a very good year” to be a musician and a saxophonist, especially in northwest Ohio. I am so proud of our continuing tradition at BGSU and am thankful for all the wonderful students who continue to inspire me as a teacher and player. There is special excitement this year as we prepare to accept the first class of advanced students for our college’s new Doctor of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music. The degree was recently approved by the Ohio Board of Regents and we are now ready to welcome doctoral candidates for one of the nation’s only contemporary music degrees.

As for travels, Marilyn and I spent a terrific six weeks teaching and performing in Florence, Italy. We are “almost” experts on Renaissance art and our Italian vocabulary has grown to about four words, including “grazie” and “buon giorno.” I also returned to Corfu, Greece, for a week-long saxophone workshop, followed by some delightful sight-seeing in Athens. In the fall, Mark Bunce and I completed our 11th concert tour, this time visiting the wilds of Colorado and Wyoming where we performed four concerts and master classes, hiked in the Snowy Mountains, and rode horses on a dude ranch near Loveland.

Other personal highlights for the year included professional activities in Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Oregon, Washington and Ohio. Watch for my upcoming release of “Killing Time” by Donald Freund on the Arizona University Recordings label (CD title *Sky Scrapings*). On a sad note, my father passed away last July from complications with Parkinson disease. But life goes on and I am proud to announce that I’ll be a grandfather this summer—wow does that sound old! Our daughter Maria and son-in-law, Tim, are expecting a baby girl next May.

Best wishes.



*John Sampen and Mark Bunce
Sylvan Dale Ranch in Colorado*