

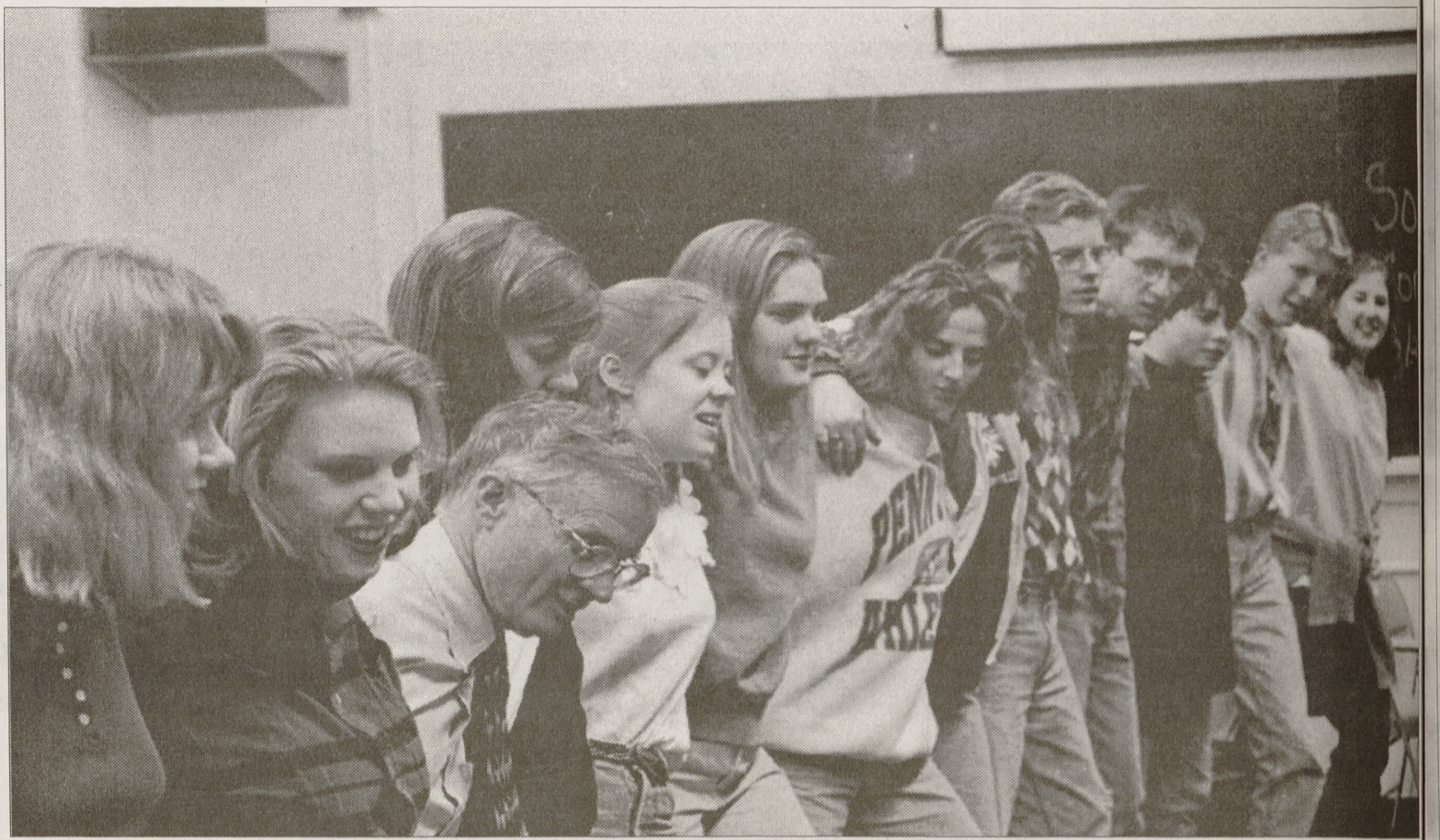
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# A FESTIVAL of MUSIC



Members of the Festival Singers sing at their first meeting Wednesday night in the Academic Building.

## Festival Singers focuses on Christian, holiday music

By Amy Protas  
THE BATTALION

Lynn Zimmermann, a senior academic adviser in the college of business administration, always dreamed of conducting a choir. Last year, that dream came true with the creation of the Festival Singers.

Zimmermann said he was in his college choir for three years and enjoyed the experience tremendously. He wanted to give students the same opportunity. "I've always had this dream to direct my own choir," Zimmermann said. "In the summer, I do a lot of advising of freshmen. I looked at their files to see who participated in high school and church choir. I later asked them if they had tried out for on campus choirs. A number of them were missing out on the opportunity of campus singing groups."

Zimmermann said out of the more than 42,000 students on campus, only 250 participate in campus singing groups. He said he knows there is more talent on campus, and Festival Singers is another chance for students to enjoy singing.

The Festival Singers is a group that focuses on singing holiday and festival music.

"There is a message we want to get across," Zimmermann said.

"The message we want to get across is that music is important for the soul, enjoying life and raising people's spirits. In the process, we are praising God."

Francisco Merchan, a Festival Singers member and a sophomore aerospace engineering major, said the choir's religious focus is what makes it unique from other campus singing groups.

**"It just seemed like a really neat way to meet people. It gives people a chance to sing without auditions."**

— SANDY DRAGER  
member of the Festival Singers

"We try to do religious festivals, but we don't use traditional songs," Merchan said. "We try to use songs people haven't heard before. There was one we practiced that's a Russian choral piece."

For those who want to sing but do not have the confidence to try out in front of others, the Festival Singers just might be the organization to join. The group holds no auditions.

Zimmermann said anyone who wants to join is welcome.

"We're unique because we're small, strictly voluntary and amateur," Zimmermann said. "That means our goal is to learn to sing and to enjoy to sing. By voluntary, I mean no auditions. We're amateur because I'm not a

degree musician, and those who participate probably don't have a lot of experience."

Sandy Drager, a Festival Singers member and a junior cell and molecular biology major, said she has never been involved in choir before, but she wanted to join the choir.

"I have always been a car or a shower singer, but never in front

of God's calling you to sing, it's not up to us to exclude."

"Everyone sounds good to God, if they're singing to him."

The Festival Singers' inception was last fall, when the members would gather around the piano in the Forsyth Center in the MSC.

"Our biggest problem has been finding a common time and a place available for us to practice," Zimmermann said. "So we started by practicing in the Forsyth Gallery."

"They have a nice grand piano, so we stood around the piano and sang Christmas carols," Schulte said being part of a new organization gives members the chance to help develop the organization.

"We want everyone to come and sing and praise God," Schulte said. "It can evolve into anything we want. The people who join will be in the process work and get to build it to what we want."

Zimmermann said music like people's spirits.

"For me, music and singing is an up-beat kind of thing," Zimmermann said. "So many things in this world are down-beat."

"You look around and see the crime and poverty. If you look too closely and you get discouraged, you can sing and your spirits soar."

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