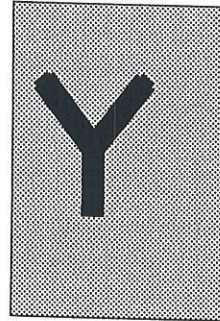


Richmond's Most Prominent Promoter . . .



The Great Hosea

BY Christy Everson



You might not recognize the name Fenroy A. Fox, but how about "The Great Hosea?" Still not sure? How about Michael Jackson, Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross, The Supremes, The Commodores, The O'Jays or Elvis Presley? These are just a few of the acts Fenroy Fox, better known as "The Great Hosea," has brought to town.

"I've done most all the big shows," says the local promoter, who then goes on to mention the names above. Fox got his start 35 years ago when he realized he had been giving away ideas to others that he could use himself. He held his first show in the coliseum that was on the corner of First and Clay streets in a converted church. It was called "Interpretations of the Stars" and featured local groups imitating the big acts.

"Thirty-five years ago I started out with that idea and never stopped," Fox said. "It was on a Monday night and I drew 1,900 people. Major Harris, who is a big act now, did Jackie Wilson. He did real well too."

Fox, as Hosea Productions, is a one-man show himself. He does it all. He contacts the agencies in New York, books the site, finds the investors, works with the radio stations to promote the show and even puts up the posters and handbills.

"Most of the time there are a lot of people who want to invest in these shows with you, but you have to be the guy who makes it work," he emphasized. "You've got to put out the posters and the handbills. You've got to do everything, because you've got to protect their money. So you've got to make that show work."

Making it work isn't always easy, and Fox has had to contend with everything from rumors to tragedy. Along the way, however, he has had opportunities most of us can only dream about, like eating with Elvis backstage at the Coliseum, or sitting and talking with Natalie Cole in her trailer at the fairgrounds.