



## **Just Friends – Central Pennsylvania’s Premier Variety Dance Band**

Just Friends, a six piece band from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, proves that variety music is the spice that flavors every occasion and any venue. The band blends harmonies and horns, energy and class, smooth ballads and dance beats, big band styling and rock band excitement.

Formed in 1992 by Vince Patti, Just Friends has evolved into a unique musical experience. No matter what style or genre of music is appropriate, Just Friends has a massive repertoire and the ability to learn and arrange virtually any request, choosing from six decades of songs and making them all sound fresh and new.

Over the years, Just Friends has entertained audiences for Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, The Hotel Hershey, The Harrisburg and York Hunt Clubs, Dauphin County Bar Association, Knoebel’s Grove Amusements, ASFCME and many others. Just Friends is the only band in this area which has an extensive repertoire of Italian music, both traditional and popular, sung in Italian and performed with precision and passion by Vince, a genuine Calabrese, and the rest of the band, who are Italian in spirit.

A highlight of Just Friends' repertoire is the “Patriotic Suite.” Originally arranged to accompany live fireworks for the Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, it has become an often-requested performance. The Patriotic Suite is a 20 minute musical work that includes a tribute to the armed forces serving overseas. Beginning with a haunting rendition of “America” from the soprano saxophone and ending with a heart stopping version of “God Bless the USA” audiences can’t help but stand and cheer by the final chorus. Upon request this work can be a special part of any patriotic holiday celebration.

### **Meet The Band**

By the time Vincenzo Patti, the Leader of Just Friends, came to the USA at the age of 21 from Calabria, Italy, he was already an accomplished performer. Vince studied at the prestigious Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Turino and became the youngest soloist to perform with the city orchestra. Vince was a highly popular sideman in the central Pennsylvania music scene and played with many groups throughout the Sixties. His own trio, the Continental Three, recorded a well-received album and was the house band for the famous Embers Restaurant, performing there six nights a week for many years. Vince's signature style on clarinet, tenor, alto and soprano sax and flute must be heard to be believed. He also is one of the band's three lead vocalists, specializing in Italian traditional and pop favorites.

### **Just Friends Biography, Page 2**

John Kelly, guitarist and lead vocalist, is a Harrisburg native with a lifelong interest in music. A self-taught musician, John has sung and played guitar and bass in church choirs as well as in local rock and variety bands such as the Cards, the Decibels, the Pickups, the Durable

Goods and, since 1997, Just Friends. John sings lead and harmony vocals in the band and enjoys the challenge of learning and arranging requests from any and all styles of music.

Joreen Kelly, keyboardist and lead vocalist, has been performing for audiences since childhood and by the time she received her degree in Music from Lebanon Valley College she had been performing, teaching and conducting choral groups for many years. Joreen is a career musician and is the music director and organist for the parish of St. Catherine Laboure in Harrisburg. As a choral conductor, composer and arranger of sacred music she especially enjoys arranging music for the band, and has written and arranged the "Patriotic Suite" that the band performs for holiday celebrations in honor of the US Service men and women overseas, as well as veterans of all our wars.

Mark Evans, bassist and vocalist, is an accomplished bassist and guitarist and has performed with bands in Texas, Tennessee, New York, and Pennsylvania. Mark has had the opportunity to open for national groups such as Three Dog Night, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Eddie Rabbitt, and others. Mark has recorded 45's and has an album that is currently distributed worldwide.

Jim Wallish, trombonist and vocalist, graduated from the Navy School of Music in 1966. He spent three years performing with the Com Cru Despac Navy Show Band. After his tour with the Navy Show Band he played with Maynard Makisic's Jazz and Show Band and filled in with many other local bands. He joined Just Friends in the summer of 2008 and has been a welcome addition to the group, performing sweet trombone solos and accompaniment.

John Wilson, drummer and vocalist, is well known in the Harrisburg area. He began his musical career with a local favorite, the Furys. They recorded two 45s and an album entitled "Heavy Feather" [Soft, Hard and Heavy]. A few of the songs were produced by Charlie Daniels, a road producer for the CBS Studio in New York City. The album was recorded in Nashville, TN at the N.A.R. and Queen of Sound Studios. The Fury's played with several famous acts, including Lou Christie, The Delfonics, Badfinger, B.J. Thomas and Gary U.S. Bonds. His local credits include the bands Everyday People, Portrait, and Rosey and the Naturals.

Consider Just Friends as part of your entertainment offering this year. John Kelly will be happy to discuss available dates for bookings. Go to [www.justfriendsband.com](http://www.justfriendsband.com) for further information or call John at (717) 979-2904. You can also email us at [jkelly@justfriendsband.com](mailto:jkelly@justfriendsband.com).