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The man behind the mic

BY JEFF ARENZ
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Little Giants honor announcer Jackson for service

FREMONT -- Longtime Fremont Ross public address announcer Larry Jackson was honored for his service during the Little Giants' boys basketball game against Tiffin Columbian on Saturday at the Purple Pit.

Jackson has been the public address voice for Ross basketball games for 25 years. He will announce his 25th season of Little Giants' football games this fall.

"I was absolutely stunned," said Jackson on Monday from his home in Fremont. "I can't believe they did this for me."

Fremont Ross Athletic Director Art Bucci surprised Jackson with a plaque that was created from the countertop inside the press box at Harmon Field, the forerunner to the Little Giants' current football home Don Paul Stadium. The microphone Jackson used to announce football games at Harmon Field is attached to the plaque.

"Larry has been a great person to work with because he loves the kids, and they love him," Bucci said.

Jackson said he loves being the public address announcer because he has the opportunity to watch 'his kids' play.

"It's hard doing basketball games because I sit in the front row," Jackson said. "There are times when I want to get up and scream and yell like a fan, but I know as an announcer I know that I can't do that."

Jackson said he was asked to provide his voice at a Fremont Ross junior varsity football game in 1984.

"After that game, (former Ross Athletic Director) Dick Stewart told me that I was his backup announcer," Jackson said.

The next week when an absence offered an opening, Stewart called upon Jackson to use his voice at a varsity football game. Jackson has been the Little Giants' announcer ever since.

"Larry has always been very supportive to all students and athletes at Fremont Ross," said lifelong friend Tom Woleslagel, who made an interesting revelation about Jackson.

"During his early years, he was the Phantom," Woleslagel said. "Larry put motivational signs in the yards of players and signed them as the Phantom. It was many years before I found out it was him. Larry has given back to the community in many ways. He is a behind the scenes guy that will truly be missed, if he ever slows down."



Fremont Ross public address announcer Larry Jackson sits behind his microphone at Harmon Field during the 2004 high school football season. On Saturday, Ross Athletic Director Art Bucci surprised Jackson by celebrating his 25 years of service to Fremont Ross during the Little Giants boys basketball game against Tiffin Columbian at the Purple Pit. (News-Messenger | File photo)