

Viva la Four Freshmen!!

by Curtis Caledron

Hello friends, you know, back in September I celebrated 15 years with the group. I went from simply taking a gig 15 years ago, to it becoming a major part of my life. I sang the 2nd part for about 12 years and have sung the 3rd part for three years now. I'm still amazed at the number of fans the Four Freshmen name carries and how the sound has endured for so long. It's such a beautiful thing and one that I've been very proud to have been a part of all these years.

Many of you know my wife and I are expecting again and we couldn't be more excited. With great news, there is sometimes some bad news. Though many people have successfully traveled for a living and still raised a family, I don't think I'm one of those people. I want to be at home for events with my kids, to take care of them when they're sick, to see my boy off on his first day of school, or see him kick his first soccer goal. With another baby coming, it's even more events that will take place that I don't want to miss. With that said, I think you know where this is going. It is time to leave the road. If there was some way for me to be in two places at the same time, I would continue on with The Four Freshmen until I was too old to travel. I love the group and have known Bob Ferreira now for 15 years, seeing him just as much, if not more, than my family over this last decade and a half. He is family now, of course.

So, I'm sure all of you understand and I never want to ever feel like there was some regret in life. Each day that passes is one that never comes back. So, when the day is done, my kids are my first priority of course, but it still won't change my love for the Freshmen and I'll always be here if the guys want an arrangement from me or they need anything I can help with. I knew Bob Flanigan, Ross Barbour, Kenny Albers and of course am still in touch with Bill Comstock. I love those guys and what they did for this group and for music in general!

I have fond memories of my first convention, even though at the time, the memories were not always fond of the cave, or our car breaking down on the way to the airport and having to climb in the back seat to unload stuff through a window since the rear door was stuck and we had no electricity in the truck. The car was basically an SUV with a rear window and luckily the window was down, but the door was electronically locked with no manual unlock. So, that was my welcome to the Four Freshmen... Made me wonder what type of organization (or lack of organization, haha) I was getting in to! Of course, over the years I came to see more and more what all of it was about and all the love and effort that goes into these conventions and really simply exists among fans of the group.

I have enjoyed meeting the fans/friends and will always look back on my years in the Freshmen with great pride and happiness. Of course, I would love to come back to the group one day, but that would be when my kids graduate high school and I'll be closer to 60, so I'm pretty sure at that point, they won't be looking for a 60 year trumpet player to join them on the road :)

Lastly, I appreciate each of you and what you have brought to my life. I've made many great friendships over the years with many of you all and I wish I had time to take out of the day and have coffee and talk about life or the Four Freshmen with each one of you. Now, as you may have guessed, I'll have even less time with a newborn on the way! I'll still be doing some behind the scenes things for the Four Freshmen and will try to stay involved where I can with the group, but my days of touring are over. One thing I will not miss is checking in at the airport and going through security and waiting in lines and sitting in super cramped seats! I will certainly think of the guys when I'm home playing with my kids and teaching them how to add or subtract, maybe some vocabulary or intricate four part vocal harmonies...

Thank you all for many years of great happiness and of course a giant thank you to Bob Ferreira, who has been a great musical partner and friend over these last 15 years. A big thanks to the Vince Johnson and Brian Eichenberger for making great music together and being with them for 12 and 13 years respectively. Those are two of the finest musicians I've worked with, and great guys. A big thank you to the current group, for putting in the effort and energy to keep this musical legacy alive and they will do a great job going forward of continuing on this group I love so much! Thank you Four Freshmen Society for all that you've done over the years to help perpetuate the sound and legacy not only with the touring group, but outside of us as well. Thank you to all the fans and friends I've come to know over these years, who have been so very kind to me. They've brought me gifts from overseas for my family, music to share, but most of all friendships made that will endure.

It's a been a great run for me, I've learned a lot about music, life and what I value most. So, for my family at home, I leave my road family. I do it with no regrets and only positive and lovely memories. I am actually working on more four part arrangements and other vocal group stuff too, so this isn't the last you are going to hear from me! If you all don't hear from me much for these next six months, please don't take it personally though, I'll have a two year old and a newborn I'll be watching during the day and then most likely giggling at night, so my time and energy will be mostly used up, but when I catch up on life, I will reply more to messages. Let's raise a toast to group 22-24 which I was a part of and let's celebrate group 25 and the continuation of the fabulous group we all cherish so much.

Viva la Four Freshmen!!

Yours truly,
Curtis

