

Green Valley, AZ and Some Reflection

by Bob Ferreira

Hello fans and friends! I hope this finds you all safe and healthy. Like all of you, I am patiently waiting for the days when life returns to enough of a sense of normalcy and there is once again public confidence to book, attend, and perform concerts. As I have said repeatedly, the four of us are chomping at the bit to get out there and make some music for you all.

Since February of 2020 we have only had three performances... Which is just insane! It has been very tough on everyone, but with each of these three performances was gained a renewed sense of excitement and optimism for the future. Like so many infamous periods in our country's history, we will get through this. This too shall pass.

Our most recent performance was on February 17th in Green Valley, Arizona which is about thirty miles south of Tucson. For me, it was about a seven hour drive from Las Vegas and was the first time I had driven to an Arizona performance in over ten years. It was a simply beautiful drive. The weather was typical late 'Winter' weather for the Southwest and perfect for driving. Through my day of travel I had plenty of moments to reminisce on the multitude of similar drives I had made in my first few years with the group. Back in the early '90s the group would play at least two or three engagements a year in Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tucson, or other outlying areas of Arizona. Sometimes the group would all pile into the "Flanivan" with our gear and head out together, but more often I would prefer to hop in my teal green '93 Honda Civic coupe loaded with drums and luggage and make the trek, solo. I have always been one of those that prefers to have the driver's side window open most of my

drives, regardless of how hot or cold it was outside which could be annoying to some. To me, it was all about feeling the wind through my long luxurious mullet (snickers are allowed here!).

My only regret with those early trips was that I wish I had taken more time to spend in the places I had performed and soaked in more. Being young, there were plenty of times when I would drive the 5½ hours from Vegas to Phoenix or Scottsdale, check into the hotel, go to sound check, do the show, take a shower and check out of the hotel only to drive the 5½ hours back to Vegas that night to hang out with my friends. I could still make that kind of trip today, but it would definitely be much more taxing on this older body, nor would I want to because I now prefer to be able to take it a bit slower and soak in a bit and reflect of where I played; or at least would take it a little slower to and fro to absorb the beauty of the scenery and magical landscapes; especially, the likes of the great Southwest. I was sure able to do that this time around as I set my car on cruise control comfortably in the right lane and let my eyes and memories absorb the natural wonders that flanked my journey along the US 93. After arriving in Green Valley and checking into the hotel, I walked around and found an intimate little restaurant close by and treated myself to some fine Italian cuisine. Tommy, Jake, and Ryan were unfortunately dealing with a very long rental car line at Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport so were not able to join me. Treating ourselves to nicer restaurants is not something we do on the road as normal fare can be quite expensive, especially on extended tours. This time it felt like a little bit of a victory celebration... I was celebrating the fact that we are still out there doing it. No matter what life has thrown at this group and us individually, we are still out there doing it. Although the guys were not with me, I tipped my glass to them and looked forward to seeing my compatriots the next day.

The day prior to our shows we had a productive day of rehearsals and time to catch up in person on business affairs as well as what has been going on in our personal lives. It is quite a surreal thing to work so closely with three other individuals on something as tight-knit and intimate as music (especially vocal harmony) while seeing so little of each other. This is where one discovers the character, commitment, and work ethic of the people with whom one works. I couldn't be happier and feel very fortunate. **(continued on page 5)**

Bay City will be Ready

By Jim Williams

The uncertainty of the COVID 19 virus has caused the postponement of our 2021 Convention to June 8-10, 2022. Everything will be transitioned without much disruption. One thing for sure, having to continue to wait to hear our beloved Four Freshmen should heighten our anticipation and make the convention more enjoyable as we break our fast. The tours will remain the same, and the hotel is just as anxious to host us. We will have the hotel almost entirely to ourselves. The biggest change again will be the shift from a Thursday – Saturday convention to Wednesday – Friday. Bay City is a weekend tourist destination during the summer, resulting in virtually all Saturday nights being booked for 2022.

One of the advantages to a small town is proximity. The Doubletree, being on the Saginaw River in the downtown, will encourage you to

explore both the River Walk and a stroll through the downtown. Just to remind you, there are over 20 restaurants and pubs within easy walking distance of the hotel ranging from Jimmy Johns, and an Omelet Shop to fine dining with a variety of choices in between. Three blocks from the hotel is a full block of antique stores, including Michigan's largest antique store.

Bring a light jacket, a hearty appetite, and of course a desire to, once again, hear our favorite vocal group, The Four Freshmen. Until then, stay home, stay safe and stay healthy. See you in June 2022.

The Michigan weather should be delightful in early June.

