



Fresh News

Volume 15, No. 1

January-February 2002

BEST VOCAL GROUP - two years in a row!

The Four Freshmen are making a splash in the new millennium!

The prestigious **DownBeat** magazine poll for 2001 was announced in the December issue. What a story....four young men, superb musicians who can knock your socks off **and/or** bring tears to your eyes with their vocal harmonies, continue the tradition established 54 years ago as **THE FOUR FRESHMEN** first burst on the musical scene.

History is yet to be made. This **IS THE START OF SOMETHING BIG!** The 2001 DownBeat Poll:

- #1 The Four Freshmen
- #2 Take 6
- #3 Manhattan Transfer
- #4 New York Voices
- #5 Jackie and Roy

Thank You

by Greg Stegeman

Imagine what it's like to wake up in the middle of the night and actually know where the hell you are! This is what I've been adjusting to over the last 3 months since I left the group. The full impact of being one of The Four Freshmen since 1989 and my subsequent "retirement" from them is something I'm still dealing with. It makes you wonder what Bob Flanigan and Ross Barbour went through when they burned their frequent flyer cards. Ross said there is life after the Freshmen, so I'm going to have faith in one who knows. I know I'm busy and I guess that's a start.

For those of you who are interested, my day goes like this: I teach brass students at the various high schools in the area during the mornings, program and announce a jazz radio show at KRML ("Play Misty For Me") in Carmel from noon to 2 pm M-F, write arrangements for the rest of the afternoon, and occasionally gig at night. I finished a big band chart with female vocal on "At Last" for the wonderful Dave Stevens Big Band out of Erie PA. We worked with Dave's band through Chick Trafford at the Palace Theatre in Greensburg PA several months ago. I'm writing for the Freshmen too. I just sent off "Once I Loved" composed by Antonio Carlos Jobim to the guys and I hope they approve. As many of you know, the new group is performing my

version of "Young & Foolish" as an opener, and I've got "The Touch of Your Lips" and Bobby Troup's "Away, Away, Away" waiting in the wings. Brian, Bob, Vince and Curtis are actively acquiring material for the next recording and I'm happy to contribute whatever they may want.

Which brings up Group #22: Curtis, Curtis, Curtis! (Sorry, I just had a "Jan Brady moment.") I'll just repeat what I said at the convention about him: I absolutely hate his guts. Not only does he have the best soloing concepts since Ken Albers, he has the nerve to be a great guy at the same time. For this, I hate.....Seriously, though, Curt and I hit it off to the point that he actually said to me "It's a shame you have to go," as if to say that it would have been fun working together. But really, I'm just glad I could get out of the way so he could come in. The level of musicianship in this current group is the highest yet. Period. It takes serious time and rehearsal to be anywhere near the **Capitol** Freshmen groups, but in time they will. The combination of their youth, talent, and energy along with the serious management of IVI should mean great things in the future. Nothing would make me happier than to see and hear the Four Freshmen at the top again, and I know all of you feel the same.

I can't possibly reflect on all the experiences I've had over the last 12 years. There have been unusual and emotional highlights to last a lifetime, but let me just simply say that despite all the sacrifices, changes, and travel abuse, I can only be grateful for the opportunity to fulfill a dream I've had since I was 16 years old. Out of the thousands of great musicians around the world, I was lucky enough to have a significant career with the group that meant the most to me. It was like winning the lottery, only it lasted longer. I've met and worked with some of the best musicians in the world, saw places I never thought I'd see, and made friends with all you nice folks. Overall, the Society has been my second family - supportive, caring, with unconditional love....

When you're one of the Four Freshmen people treat you with respect and even some "awe." That's because Bob, Ross, Ken, Bill, Don, Hal, and Ken E. built something that will last forever. The legacy of this group will continue to inspire musicians and please listeners for all time. It's in the Freshmen DNA: beautiful romantic songs infused with harmonic sophistication and heart. Throw in natural humor and dedication and you've got the greatest quartet in the world. I'm very excited about where this new group will take us. The Freshmen story is never ending. Thank you all for letting me pass through.....Love, Greg

The Four Freshmen Society, Inc.
PO BOX 9804
McLEAN VA 22102-0804

Celebrating *The Four Freshmen*
A Jazz Legend - Since 1948