

## Kaz Takahashi

by Doug Kent

Picture a young boy filled with amazement and wonder as he discovered his father's old harmonica and a song book by Stephen Foster and picture further that this discovery was so powerful that it shaped the remainder of his life.

Born April 20th 1948 in a small town, the 3rd of 4 brothers, Mr. April had a totally normal childhood and was an above average student. Normal childhood activities, like volleyball, swimming and painting took up most of his spare time but the discovery of music was instrumental in shaping the course of his life.

After high school, Mr. April traveled from his small town to the big city. He was able to get a job at the local airport, washing dishes taken from airplanes. He enjoyed the large city but "It" was not kind to him. An accident and 3 months in the hospital drove him back to his small town. No employment was available there so he enlisted in the Army. After his basic training he learned photography and gained much experience while in the service. Upon his discharge he worked for a small newspaper in his home town. Eight years later, in 1983, he bought a one way ticket, sold all his worldly possessions, and took ten thousand dollars and his camera to become an overseas free lance photographer for a small local sports newspaper. His lifelong desire to travel to this new country was fulfilled. He studied and learned a new language and loved being part of this new culture. Since his childhood he had always wanted to be part of this country. The large cities were very hectic, so Mr. April sought solace in the large National Parks System in order to get away, and he acquired a close relationship with, and interest in, Nature.

At age 10 Mr. April knew that his personal life was different. He had attractions for his teachers in High School but it was while in the Army that he had his first gay encounter. That relationship was with an older married man and it lasted for 10 years. In 1998 while in his new country he met Bill, a retired college professor from Finland and they fit together like gloves. Bill encouraged Mr. April to pursue his love of photography and his love of Nature. He helped him develop and refine a career that led to worldwide recognition of his photographic talent.

Sadly, Bill passed in 2008 and Mr. April was devastated with the loss of his soul mate. In 2011, Mr. April retired to South Florida and became a

Prime Timer. He maintains his interest in photography. He has several books published worldwide. Music remains an interest but golf now occupies most of his time. He is still doing local and national shows of his photography, and volunteers his time taking pictures of seniors. This amiable Prime Timer is looking for a good friend to share his life and those special times together. But until that happens he is having lots of fun with his older friends. Mr. April is a very, very special guy; can you guess his name and the country he loved so much?

