

May 1, 2006

Dear Friends:

I need to share with you a very difficult decision that I have reached this week. I have asked to be released from the performance obligations that have been made for the rest of this year.

I understand and appreciate the deep devotion that many of you have shown to me during the past 19 years of my musical career. I have not made this decision lightly, and I deeply regret any inconvenience that this may cause to those of you who have already made plans to attend some of these performances.

There are several reasons for this decision, some of them very personal. But I want to assure each of you that Bettye and I are in good health and still love music and everything it stands for. Music will always be a part of my life.

But we have decided that at this time, we need to be close to our families. As many of you know, most of our family is in Virginia. We've been away from what we have always called home for the past 20 years. During that time, we have lost my father and Bettye's mother. We weren't there for them, and we have always regretted not spending more time with them. We believe that we need to be in Virginia at this time. We want to be more involved with our immediate families and be available to them and their needs. I trust that most of you will understand.

We will continue to utilize this web site to keep you updated on ongoing projects. Maybe now I can finish that CD of original songs that you have been so patient about. And perhaps, there will be other musical projects that I can pursue without being away from home for long periods of time. My options are open and I will keep you informed thru the web site.

We have made a lot of dear friends over the past years. We will always be grateful for the support, encouragement and prayers that you have shared with us. I hope that we can also count on your good wishes for us as we begin this new phase of our life.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Ricky Van Shelton