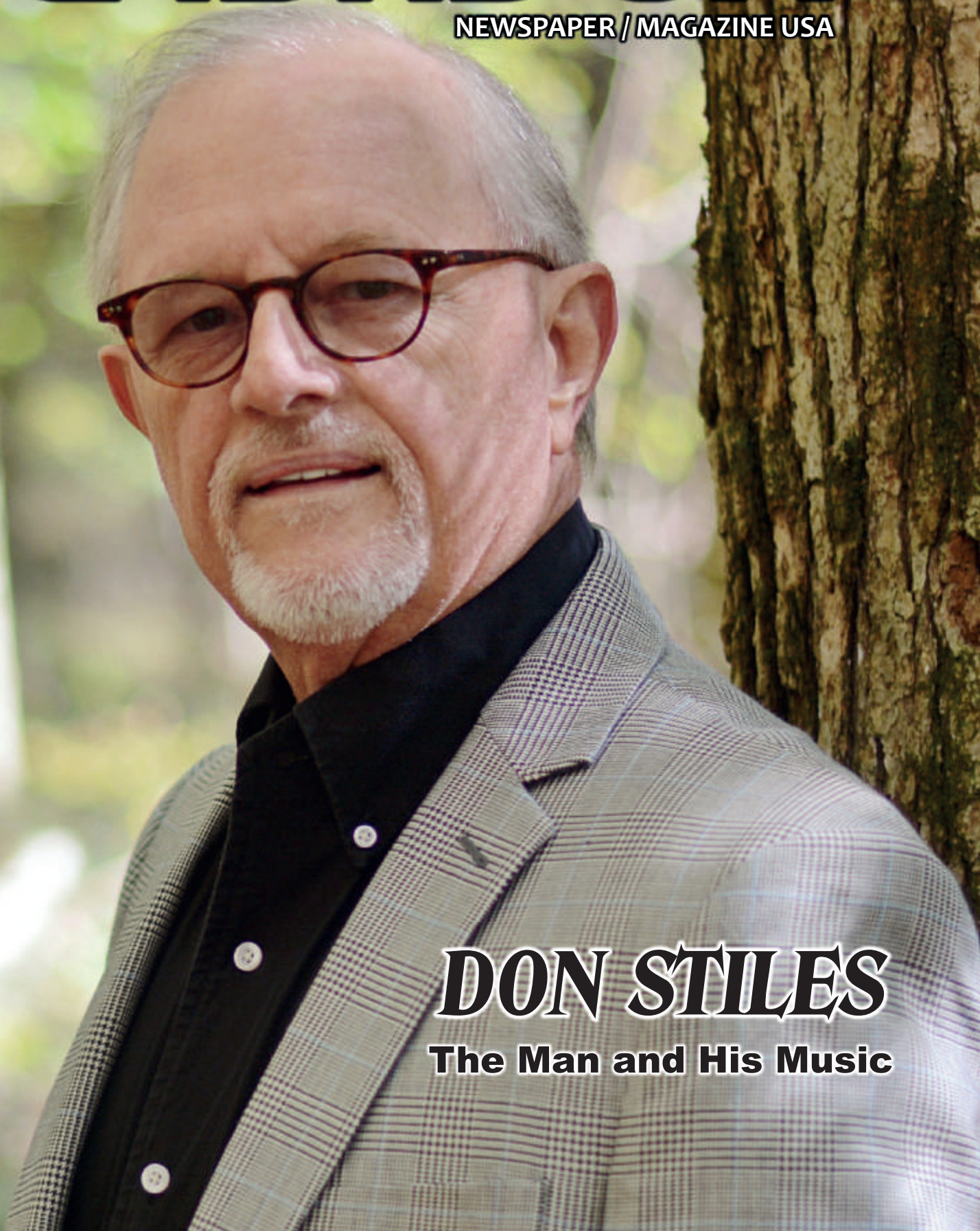


AUGUST 2022

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NEWSPAPER / MAGAZINE USA



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# CASHBOX

**AUGUST 2022**

CASHBOX Magazine was originally founded by Bill Gersh in 1942. However, in the late 1950s George Albert took over until his death in 1997. In 1941 the name was associated with pinball machines and jukeboxes as Cashbox Wurlitzer.

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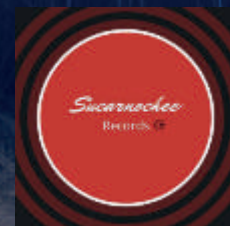


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# Where Are They Now?

A Retrospective Glimpse at Yesterday's Rising Music Stars  
Who Became Icons and Where They Are Today

THIS EDITION: Bobbie Gentry • Corey Hart

By Robin Tanner

## Bobbie Gentry



Beginning in 1967, Bobbie Gentry captivated the entire country with her sultry, smooth voice. Written by Gentry, *Ode To Billy Joe* was the Southern tale of a Mississippi family sitting around the dinner table. Over black-eyed peas and apple pie, the family discusses the suicide of a local boy named Billie Joe McAllister. The eerie song was an American and European smash

hit. The song spent four weeks at #1. Gentry's album of the same title was released by Capitol Records in 1967. She received Grammy awards for 'Best New Artist' and 'Best Female Pop Vocal Performance' in 1968. At the age of twenty-two, the Mississippi native recorded *Mississippi Delta*, (on the flip-side of *Ode To Billy Joe*), it was a country-fried homage to her homeland.

Bobbie Gentry and Glen Campbell had a successful duet album simply titled, "Bobbie Gentry and Glen Campbell." Following by her 1969 album, "Touch 'Em With Love," Gentry became one of the most in-demand singer/songwriters on the Vegas circuit. During the latter part of her nearly two decades in the public eye, Gentry spent a majority of it in Las Vegas, exploring her own creativity. She crafted glamorous, glitzy, and fabulous stage shows that had critical acclaim for

their striking set design. She was credited with designing a majority of the costumes and the impressive dance choreography of these phenomenal Vegas shows. Along with the successful Las Vegas residency, she was the host of her own CBS variety show, *The Bobbie Gentry Happiness Hour*.

Gentry was no one-hit wonder, with eleven chart topping singles. She was the original *Fancy* twenty years before Reba McEntire had a Top 10 hit with it. Gentry recorded the song in 1969 about the Southern courtesan who wooed her way to a 'Georgia mansion and an elegant New York townhouse flat.' "Fancy is my strongest statement for women's lib, if you really listen to it," Gentry said in 1974. "I agree wholeheartedly with that movement and all the serious issues that they stand for."

During the height of success, Gentry stopped performing. No more interviews, recordings, or television appearances. She never announced plans to retire, but merely vanished from the spotlight. One of the last appearances was at the Academy of Country Music Awards in 1982. Gentry has led a private life away from the entertainment industry for nearly forty years. Still, Bobbie Gentry continues to inspire and captivate artists such as Lucinda Williams, Shelby Lynne, and Sheryl Crow, who have all cited Gentry as an inspiration.



**Based in SW Oklahoma, Dale travels the country, singing and sharing God's Word and what He has done for us!**

**DALE ROCHELL**

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It was recently announced that Bobbie Gentry joins folks like Steve Earle, Kent Blazy, Brett James, and Spooner Oldham as the newest class of inductees into the Nashville Songwriter's Hall of Fame.



### Corey Hart

Corey Hart has sold over sixteen million records worldwide, amassing nine consecutive Top 40 hits while scoring an impressive thirty-two Top 40 singles (including twelve Top 10) in his native Canada. He was Grammy nominated, has received ASCAP Juno awards in multiple categories, as well as Quebec's ADISQ awards.

Corey's video of his song, *Sunglasses At Night* became a staple on MTV during the summer of 1984, claiming the first ever Juno award for 'Video of the Year.' An interesting fact, *Sunglasses At Night* has been covered over one-thousand times, and in most every genre of music. His iconic debut single was an international sensation, propelling a young Hart to the summit of the Pop world.

His sophomore album, "Boy In The Box" achieved diamond status certification (one million plus sales), faster than any other Canadian artist in history. The album spawned four hit singles, led by his classic anthem, *Never Surrender* which spent nine weeks at #1 in Canada, winning 'Single of the Year' at the Juno Awards in 1985.

Corey has performed in arenas from Montreal to Manila and from Tokyo to Toronto. Through the 80s and 90s, he continued to release successful albums and to write songs that resonated with a vast and accepting audience.

In 1999, following the birth of his third daughter, Corey stepped away from his recording and touring career to raise his four children with wife, Julie Masse.

During the years away from the spotlight, Corey wrote and produced several songs for fellow Canadian superstar, Celine Dion. In 2003, spearheaded by Sire Music's CEO

Seymour Stein, Hart was offered a record label partnership with Warner Music Canada, which he named Siena Records.

On June 3, 2014, after a twelve-year hiatus from live work, Corey triumphantly returned to stage performing to a sold-out hometown Montreal Bell Centre Arena, billed as 'One Night - Three Decades Of Music.' That same evening, Hart also released his autobiography entitled, *Chasing The Sun*. He performed what was billed as his farewell show. "I've learned since that marathon concert to never say never. When, and if, the opportunity feels right to play live again, I shall follow the call."

In 2016, Hart was inducted onto Canada's prestigious Walk of Fame. In 2019, he released his first studio album in over twenty years, produced by the legendary Bob Ezrin. Hart then embarked on a major arena tour across Canada and Asia for the first time since the 1980s. On March 17, 2019, Corey was inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame at the Juno Awards gala, the highest honor a musician can receive in Canada.

Corey and Julie live in The Bahamas with their four children (India, Dante, River, Rain). The couple celebrated twenty-five years together in 2019.

In May 2020, Hart announced the release of a new version of the 1985 hit *Never Surrender*, with the lyrics updated to reflect a message of resilience and hope during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was reported by The Canadian Press Corey Hart and members of Nickelback are scheduled to perform at the Canadian Songwriters Hall of Fame gala. Nickelback's Chad Kroeger and Ryan Peake are set to participate in a tribute performance to inductees Bryan Adams and Jim Vallance. They will be joined by Corey Hart, the musical mind behind *Sunglasses At Night*. The event will take place at Toronto's Massey Hall on September 24, 2022. It will be the first in-person ceremony event since 2017.

[www.coreyhart.com](http://www.coreyhart.com)



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# BROOKS FORSYTH

## New Class of Americana

By Robin Tanner

**B**rooks Forsyth is a new class of Americana music who embraces a variety of genres from Appalachia, Folk, Country Blues, Bluegrass, Roots Rock and beyond. The versatile guitar player reels in the audience with a masterful flat and finger picking style, along with the voice of a melodious storyteller.

The Boone, North Carolina native has three albums under his belt. He's an accomplished singer/songwriter whose music can be heard worldwide. Throughout the last fifteen years, Brooks has performed solo, as too with a variety of musical ensembles across the U.S.

Brooks was inspired by a wide variety of musical talents like Bob Dylan, The Beatles, and Doc Watson. He shares, "Each one of these mentioned artists were able to maintain a pureness, even as their styles evolved and they became commercially successful, they remained true to their artistry."

The timeless classic *Everlasting Love* is Forsyth's latest single. The new rendition spotlights his vocal performance as well as fiddle and banjo highlights. "My version of the classic tune *Everlasting Love* was written by Buzz Cason and Mac Gayden. Customarily, I stick to recording my own songs, but decided to take a crack at the hit after passing the idea along to Buzz. It's unlike anything I've ever recorded. I'm never good at labeling genres, but this recording probably falls somewhere in the Americana/Pop/Rock universe, I think," says Forsyth. He is currently in the studio putting the

finishing touches on a fourth album for an anticipated release in the fall.

Forsyth has a few special career moments. "Recording at Creative Workshop Studio in Nashville, Tennessee with producer Buzz Cason was certainly a highlight in my career. A second was playing with Doc Watson at a press conference prior to a music festival in Western, North Carolina. Then there is the time I met Ramblin' Jack Elliot out in California. I was particularly into his music, and was also starting to ramble myself! To meet him in the flesh and hear some of his stories was a grand inspiration and a memorable recollection. There is nothing that beats touring the U.S. - getting to see the country, meeting new people, and building new friendships, well, that is always an all-time high."

Forsyth loves working in the studio and recording new material, "That's where I truly want to spend my time. I have a lot of songs piling up, and I feel a responsibility to put them down. Performing live, traveling, meeting people, I do get a kick out of it all. But my main art, I believe, is in the studio. I hope to progress with that for many years to come."

What fans can expect at a Brooks Forsythe concert is a whole lot of finger pickin' guitar, long-held high-pitched vocal notes, personal anecdotes with many digressions, and hopefully, in his words, "Applause!"

[www.brooksforssyth.com](http://www.brooksforssyth.com)

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# Dale Rochell

Dale Rochell has determined to follow God's leading, releasing all control to Him, all the while, *"He's having the time of my life!"* As Dale points out, *"This should be a song."* No doubt, one day soon, it will be. An understanding wife, Janell (manager and roadie) agrees wholeheartedly.

## He's Having the Time of My Life

By Deborah Baliles

Growing up active in church and singing for most of his life, Dale would never have imagined to the where, or to the level, God would take him. Nor would he have imagined it to be flying solo, something that was never on his bucket list. Going on four years forward, beyond all imagination have been the amazing joys on this new path. Dale humbly expresses, "I am so, so blessed to be part of the ever-expanding Gospel music world, surrounded by beautiful fans and fellow artists."

Never forgetting the comradery of past singing with Praise and Worship groups, Dale cherishes the many years of mingling and forming relationships with countless Contemporary and Southern Gospel artists. Dale would open for Carman, the early days, spending lots of time with him and his crew. Whether it be in travels, sharing an event, or sharing a stage, Dale has been amongst some of music's greats - the likes of Joe Diffie, The Kingsmen, The Hinsons, Mary Faye Jackson, Johnathan Bond, Barbara Fairchild, Bill Baker, Donnie Williamson of The Williamsons, Karen Peck & New River, Mike Leichner, Craig Morgan, Triumphant Quartet, Darrell & Chris Freeman, and Molded Clay, just to mention a little more than a few.

Dale developed a long friendship with The Hinsons, the original group. That friendship has carried over to the next generation. In recent years as the legacy continues, The Hinsons (Kenny's son Weston, wife Christie, and daughter Jordie) have shared many events/dates with Dale and Janell. Dale loves to reminisce of those days in the 70s/80s, "Oh, the family blends. The music that came out of that era is still popular today, as far as I am concerned. Purposely try to do many of those 'ole songs in our services."

Invited to sing at the Daywind Nationwide Talent Search in Alabama, Dale would meet the Gospel group, Molded Clay. While there, he and Janell would receive a call from the veterinarian that, due to heart issues, the family pet of thirteen years had been put to sleep. Seeing them visibly upset, the guys from Molded Clay walked up and asked if they could

pray with them. "Positive they were our angels sent to us from God himself, such a comforting, blessed group of men." By the way, Dale was runner up in the talent search, but at the time it did not seem so important.

Singing at the Loretta Lynn Annual Gospel Sing, looking up from the product table, there they were, the Molded Clay guys. "Such a welcomed sight," says Dale. "We were uncertain that we would ever run into them again. But there they were. That night moved to having a meal with them, ending with an acapella song, sitting right there in the middle of Cracker Barrel! What a joy!"

Dale is pleased that his solo career is "bouncing all around." Following an award event, and winning, Dale opened on the main stage for Triumphant Quartet and Karen Peck & New River. He has appeared on the Don Frost & Friends Gospel Hour on TCT television, with invites for three more tapings, a Christmas Special, and an Easter Program. An interview on TCT's Texas Country Gospel, produced by Ms. Mary Faye, led to co-hosting a show with her. (Shows airing on TCT are seen 24/7, all over the US and some foreign countries.)

Having participated in the Country Gospel At The Creek in Pigeon Forge (2021), an invite has been extended for this year. Dale was also a part of the Jammin' for Jesus event held at the Baldknobbers Theater in Branson, Missouri, singing and co-hosting the December, 2021 show. Not to mention, Dale already has plans to be with the Jammin' for Jesus folks again in 2023. In his words, "All I can say is, thank ya Jesus! All that I ask is stand with me on your knees. Mention me when you talk to Jesus"

Group ministry or solo ministry, all face parallel challenges in searching for relatable music, booking events, balancing schedules, a family, and a week-day job. Dale enlightens, "I suppose my biggest challenge is my wife. Oops, best that I rephrase that. I suppose my biggest challenge is, well, me. My wife works a secular day job, in addition to the work she does for our ministry. During the really trying times

of our ministry, my biggest challenge is to hold back my bark, sometimes forgetting to be thankful and so grateful for my best friend.”

So far, two singles have made radio charting, one resting there for some twenty weeks. 2021 also produced a music video for Dale, *Three Nails And A Cross*, written by George Strait, Bubba Strait, Dean Dillon, and Bobby Boyd, produced by Mary Faye Jackson. “Blessed” are the many email responses from those who have seen it. Randal Christy, Gospel radio out of Ada, Oklahoma and Randall Wilds, Millennium Music Group/Wilds and Associates have been very influential in the success of the single release, *Thank You Jesus*.



**Dale & Janell Rochell**

Dale sums it up, “My testimony is lengthy, way too much for these pages. My life is filled with broken pieces, terrible choices, and ugly truths. But I know a God of comebacks. I am not a perfect preacher, in fact, not a preacher at all. However, to all those sitting in audiences thinking that they could never do a God called thing, let me tell you, you can. Besides, you will, if God gets ahold of you! Have to say, do not know who is having the greater time of their life - Him or me!”

If given the privilege of being in a Dale Rochell concert, know this by his own admission, he is not an entertainer. A concert will always turn church, an event to honor all of Him. If Dale should stop in the middle of a song, it is because God said, ‘Whoa, that is not the right song.’ “That God only be glorified, not Dale Rochell. I am just here... to go. See you there!”

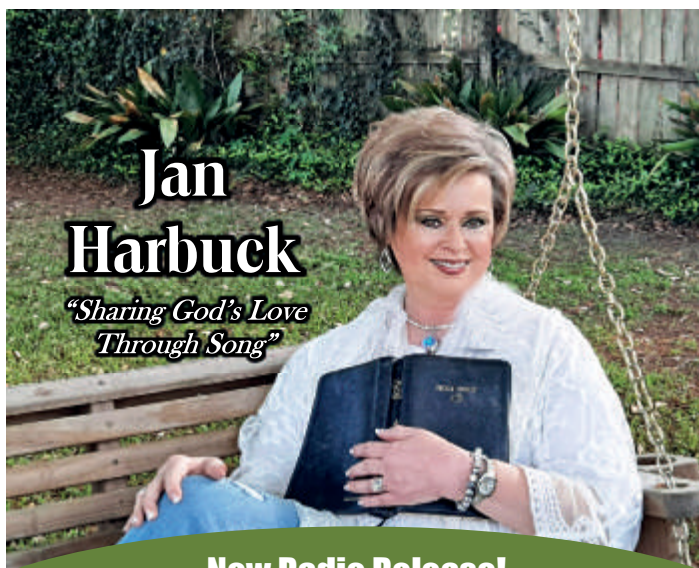


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## **MAKING IT HAPPEN**

**By Robin Tanner**

**B**orn Karly Coleman, Karly C is from Hamilton Square, New Jersey. She launched her music career in 2016. The self-taught guitarist, bassist, and piano player co-wrote and performed five songs for the hit television show, *Dance Moms* on Lifetime. Just two years later she signed a production music publishing deal with Warner Chappell/BMG, making her debut with a ten-song collection titled, “Take Me As I Am”. Karly followed up with two singles, *You And Your Whatever* and *Another Drink Or Three*. Both singles crossed over into the Country radio format claiming momentum on Music Row charting.

There is no question Karly is influenced by many versatile artists. “I’ve always admired Adele and Sia,” she reveals. “They are completely authentic, have an undeniable talent as vocalists, and are well respected. It’s all about their art, not gimmicks. I have also admired Pink for her carefree, fearless, take-me or leave-me attitude. I don’t have the time or energy to try and be someone I’m not, with an over-the-top persona, nor am I a social media content creator. I love to make music. Period! Aside from that, I’m a huge fan of 80s rock. Some of my favorite singers of all time are Steve Perry and Michael Bolton. I enjoy covering some of their songs.”

Karly worked with Japanese EDM producer, Westie Seb to record the 2021 single, *Taste Of You* which can be heard on radio stations throughout the U.S. She also makes a special

vocal appearance on the Pop Dance single to be released later this year, *Another Taste Of You*, produced by Jason Nevins (songwriter, record producer, and remixer widely known for his Pop and dance productions). Taking a turn in creative direction, Karly is currently in the studio recording her next EP, a project stocked with Pop/Punk originals, in a vein similar to that of Avril Lavigne.

Karly reflects on career things most memorable, thus far. “It’s cool watching the little girls (known as the *minis*) dance to my song on *Dance Moms*. Then, driving home from work and hearing my song playing on the SiriusXM Pop channel, Venus. Watching my single, *Another Drink or Three*, climb the MusicRow Country Breakout chart last summer. It was fun doing a 2020 interview with Big Chris from Blast 106FM in Northern Ireland. When I listened to his show, a week ahead of time, to get the general idea of what to expect, I looked at my fiancé and said, ‘I thought you said they spoke English!’”

Karly’s latest single is, *I Was Gonna Love You*. She describes the song in this colorful way, “It’s an idea that I came up with one day just noodling around on the piano. I was thinking about my bar gigs, and thought of a scenario where a singer is performing and instantly falls in love with a complete stranger, who asks if she would sing while he plays her guitar. Of course, I needed to add some heat! To

complicate the situation, the stranger already had a girlfriend, whom he left at the bar to go play with the singer. So, prince charming turns world's worst cheater! To make matters worse, the singer instigates and ignites the situation by saying, 'You two just don't seem to quite fit, having every intent to steal the guy away.'

Karly C worked with an amazing team from Nashville to record and produce this single, "Dylan Maloney (guitar player for Colt Ford) was my session leader and producer. He took my work tape and concepts, and turned them into amazing radio-ready productions. Tim Galloway plays dobro, while Tania Hancheroff sings background vocals. Both are very busy, well-known, session players in Nashville and have played on some of the biggest recordings in Country music. To round things out, Nashville legend and all-around fun-loving guy, Billy Decker mixed and mastered the work. I'm very grateful to have each of them help make this my best work yet! My goal is to make music all of the time, instead of on top of working my day job. I love to record. I can sit in



the studio for hours on-end creating music, losing all track of time."

Karly continues, "I also love to sing live. It would be a dream come true to finally know what it's like to sing for an arena full of people, rather than in the bars. I am not religious, but a quote that rings true with me is, 'God helps those who help themselves.' I've been working my butt off towards a music career for ten years now, all while holding down a nine to five job. You can't wait around for things to happen. You have to make them happen!"

What is a concert gig like for Karly C? "Hopefully, you will enjoy the best singing you've ever heard, up close and personal. I can also guarantee what they won't see, and that is a spectacle of a stage show. It's basically being at a bar gig with me, where you're as much a part of the show as I am. I really don't know how to be any other way. No matter the size of the venue, I'm still just me, Karly C."

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## Barbara Mandrell Celebrates 50th Anniversary as Grand Ole Opry Member



The Grand Ole Opry will honor Country Music Hall of Fame member, Barbara Mandrell on her 50th anniversary as a member of the Grand Ole Opry family on Saturday, July 30, 2022. Opry member Carrie Underwood, who credits Mandrell as one of her musical and professional inspirations, is scheduled to perform and help honor this incredible music legend.

Barbara will be in attendance at both Opry shows. She shared on social media, "We can't wait to celebrate with y'all!"

Mandrell, who signed her first major label deal with Columbia Records in 1969, was inducted into the Grand Ole Opry on July 29, 1972. Her final performance took place on the Opry stage in 1997 as she decided to retire from the music business completely. "It was a television special, and we called it 'The Last Dance,'" she remembers. "I chose that venue because it felt like my home."

Mandrell has several awards and accolades to her credit including Country Music Association's 'Entertainer of the Year' (twice), and 'Female Vocalist' (twice). In 2009, she received her induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame.

For more information, visit [www.opry.com](http://www.opry.com).

## Jimmy Lee & Jerry Lee - The Boys from Ferriday

Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart, together with Rock & Roll icon Jerry Lee Lewis, are releasing their much-anticipated new album, "Jimmy Lee & Jerry Lee - The Boys From Ferriday."

Reverend Swaggart, in his own words, "My cousin Jerry Lee Lewis and I grew up together in the small Louisiana town of Ferriday. There we learned, by heart, the hymns of the church and how to play them in a way that redefined Gospel music. I am so thrilled that he has come back to our Lord Jesus Christ! We have put together this one-of-a-kind collection that will take you back to our boyhood days in that little, white-framed church. As Jerry Lee and I once again play and sing these Spirit-filled hymns, we believe that it will bless you abundantly so."



This phenomenal Gospel album includes the hymns, *The Old Rugged Cross*, *Jesus Hold My Hand*, *Lily of the Valley*, *I'll Fly Away*, *It Is No Secret* and four more beautiful songs of the church. More discussion of this amazing release can be found on the Jimmy Swaggart Facebook page.

The album is expected in-house July 15, 2022. To pre-order this historic album, visit [www.shopjms.org](http://www.shopjms.org).



## Casting Crowns Announces Fall Tour

Following a successful forty-two-city spring run, the Grammy winning, multi-platinum group Casting Crowns has announced plans to head back out this fall. They will be taking The Healer Tour to an additional thirty-seven major markets across the nation.

Presented by Compassion International, the fall tour launches September 22, 2022, in El Paso, Texas. Special featured guests will be CAIN and Anne Wilson. The tour will stop in cities like Phoenix, Anaheim, Las Vegas, Spokane, San Antonio, Hershey, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Orlando, Minneapolis, Omaha, St. Louis, Pensacola, and wrapping up in Lexington, Kentucky on December 3, 2022.

Tickets for The Healer Tour are on sale now. Ticket options include Gold Circle Tickets, featuring best seats, early entry/early access to merchandise shopping, merchandise discounts, and a souvenir laminate. More information can be found at [www.CastingCrowns.com](http://www.CastingCrowns.com).

*Cashbox News continued on page 18 >>>*



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### Wynonna Announces Judds Final Tour Will Go On

As Wynonna Judd has promised, the show will go on for the Judds' previously announced Final Tour after the death of her mother and duo partner, Naomi Judd. A press release reveals that a slate of all-star female guests will join Wynonna Judd to complete the tour in tribute to the Judds' enduring legacy, calling it the "ultimate girls night out."

Brandi Carlile, Faith Hill, Little Big Town, Martina McBride, Ashley McBryde and Trisha Yearwood are set to join Judd for the tour, with more guests to be announced.

She shared her thoughts on the matter during the celebration of life. "I've made a decision, and I thought I'd share it on national television that, after a lot of thought, I'm gonna have to honor her and do this tour," an emotional Wynonna said, according to People magazine.

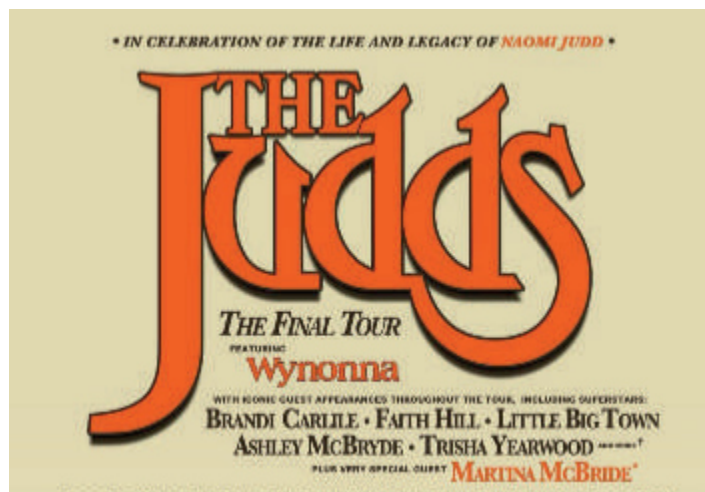
"The show must go on, as hard as it may be, and we will show up together, and you will carry me as you've carried me for 38 years... So we will continue this spectacle. That's what she would want, right?" she added.

"I am humbled, once again, by the loyalty of the fans who have been with us for 38-plus years, who continue to show up for me when I need them the most," Wynonna Judd states. "I am grateful that we will continue to honor the Judds legacy, together."

Naomi Judd's husband, Larry Strickland, adds, "I am so happy that in this time of grief for us all, Wynonna has agreed to move forward with this tour as my sweet wife Naomi would have wanted her to do."

Martina McBride will take the stage on select nights of the Judds: The Final Tour to perform an entire set of her own hits, while Judd will wrap up each night by singing some of her solo hits, as well as the Judds' classic hits.

Carlile, Hill, Little Big Town, McBryde, Yearwood and more will join Judd on various nights of the tour, culminating in a newly added performance at the Rupp Arena in Lexington, Kentucky,



where Hill will join Judd for a performance that will wrap the Judds' career where they began their musical journey together before ever making the journey to Nashville.

"What a full-circle moment it will be to end the tour in Kentucky where it all began. It means so much to have my sister-friend, Faith, join me for this musical celebration," Judd states, adding, "It is pretty amazing - all of the people who have come forward to offer up their time and their gifts. I am feeling extra grateful."

The 11-date tour is slated to launch in Grand Rapids, Michigan at Van Andel Arena on September 30, and run through October, wrapping up at Rupp Arena on October 29.

The Judds rose to fame beginning with the release of their debut single, *Had a Dream (For the Heart)*, in 1983. Their second single, *Mama He's Crazy*, gave them their first of 14 No. 1 hits, and they would go on to become one of the most successful and awarded Country acts of all time.



### Meghan Trainor Takin' It Back This Fall

Eight years ago, we were singing along with Meghan Trainor songs that took the world by storm, *All About That Bass* and *Dear Future Husband*. With much anticipation, Trainor has just announced that her latest album "Takin' It Back" is coming this fall, 2022.

The twenty-eight-year-old singer/songwriter delivered the news, via Instagram, that the album will be available October 21, 2022. Captioning a photo of the upcoming album's brightly colored cover art, which features the artist lounging in a floral body suit across a spiral staircase, she simply wrote, "New album TAKIN' IT BACK out Oct 21st!"

The release was simultaneously announced in an interview with Rolling Stone, in which the Grammy winner revealed that the new record will feel like a return to a form of her breakthrough debut album, "Title." "It's like Title 2.0," Trainor told the publication. "It's my old school. It's true to myself in all the weird genres that I go to, but also modern with my Doo-Wop in there. The lyrics are stronger than ever, and it's still a party!"

This marks her fourth full-length project since 2020's "Treat Myself" (not counting a Christmas album, "A Very Trainor Christmas" or the 2021 reissue of her EP "The Love Train.")

The new album will be Trainor's first since she welcomed her first child, son Riley with Spy Kids actor, Daryl Sabara. Many of the album's songs will explore her motherhood journey as well as love for her husband. The songs about learning to feel good again about a mother's body, after all the scarring and physical changes experienced following pregnancy and/or a C-section delivery are sure to resonate with most all mothers. Also on the play list are collaborations with Arturo Sandoval, Natti Natasha, and Teddy Swims.

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### **BTS Members Pursuing Solo Projects and a Potential Break**

Members of BTS, the superstar K-Pop group, said they plan to pursue solo projects and have discussed a potential break. The group is comprised of RM, Jung Kook, Jin, SUGA, j-hope, Jimin, and V.



According to a video posted on their YouTube channel, FESTA celebration marking the group's 9th Anniversary, the group discussed the highs and lows of their industry. They said they believe taking time apart will help them mature as individuals. The word "hiatus" was used in English subtitles on the video.

However, in a statement to the Associated Press, Hybe, the South Korean entertainment company behind BTS, clarified that they group will still be working on projects together, as well as individually. "BTS are not taking a hiatus. Members will be focusing more on solo projects at this time," the statement read.

Jimin said the group is going through a rough patch right now, "We're trying to find our identity and that's an exhausting and long process."

j-hope added that spending time apart will help BTS learn how to be one again, "I hope you don't see this as a negative thing, and see it as a healthy plan. I think BTS will become stronger that way."

RM agreed saying that while BTS is different from other Pop groups, "The problem with K-Pop, and the whole idol system, is that they don't give you time to mature. You have to keep producing music and keep doing something." RM said that he had been feeling overwhelmed and overworked by the high standards BTS had set for themselves, calling himself a rapping machine at one point. "I kept feeling like I was trapped inside myself. I wanted to shed that off for a little bit and leave myself alone." RM said. "But right now, we've lost our direction and I just want to take some time to think and then return, but that feels rude to our fans and like I'm letting down their expectations."

### **Pink Floyd Releases New Music After Twenty-Five Years with Proceeds Going to Ukraine**

Pink Floyd will release two physical versions of their first new music in over twenty-five years. The single, *Hey Hey Rise Up* was first released digitally in April 2022 in support of the people of Ukraine.

*Hey Hey Rise Up* was recorded in late March 2022 in David Gilmour's barn. (David Gilmour, the voice and guitar of Pink Floyd). The song features vocals by Andriy Khlyvnyuk of the Ukrainian band, BoomBox, who recorded himself in full military gear singing the folk song, *The Red Viburnum In The Meadow* to the empty streets in Kyiv's Sofiyskaya Square.

Gilmour was so moved by the performance that he called drummer Nick Mason, bassist Guy Pratt, and keyboardist Nitin Sawhney to organize a recording session, featuring the video of Khlyvnyuk projected on the wall. The performance marks the first time Pink Floyd has recorded new music since the release of "The Division Bell" in 1994.

"My daughter-in-law, who actually is Ukrainian, sent it to me and I thought, 'Wow, that's fantastic,'" Gilmour recently told Rolling Stone on discovering Khlyvnyuk's work. "It just struck me that here we are, with our name (Pink Floyd) and this platform, that we could use it more. That piece of singing immediately got me thinking of turning it into something."

On resurrecting Pink Floyd for a cause, Gilmour explains, "I hope the song does some good. I hope we achieve something with it."

The single will be available on both, a 7-inch and CD single on October 21, 2022, in the U.S. Both formats boast the newly reworked version of *A Great Day For Freedom*, from the band's 1994 album. David Gilmour reimaged the song using the original tapes, which featured Nick Mason on drums, and the late Richard Wright on keyboards. Proceeds for the physical release, and ongoing digital sales will go to Ukraine Humanitarian Relief.





**Luke Combs and Wife Nicole Hocking Welcome A Baby Boy**

Luke Combs and Nicole Hocking are officially parents! The Country superstar couple welcomed their first child, a baby boy, on June 19, 2022. Tex Lawrence Combs arrived on Father's Day, as dad and mom point out in their respective Instagram posts announcing the birth - "It's going to be hard to top this past Father's Day! Welcome to the world, Tex Lawrence Combs. You are the best, chilliest angel boy and I'm so happy I was chosen to be your mom. These are the days."

Per Luke, the family of three are now home from the hospital, "Mom and baby are healthy. Life is good!"

Combs may have established his son's delivery date, as he told The Tennessean at CMA Fest in early June, "Maybe I'll be a dad by Father's Day. Who knows? Could be. That'd be cool."

Combs remained tight-lipped on many of the details of his wife's pregnancy, but has openly shared his thoughts about his impending transition into fatherhood. As he learns how to juggle a busy touring schedule, along

with his parenting duties, Combs says that putting a priority on his family life is important to him.

On being a dad, "I don't want to be a dad that's not around, or the dad that you see on TV and go, 'Oh, that is my dad and that is where he is today, I guess. Family is important to me. I'd like to be the guy throwing the football to them.'"

Combs also admitted that Nicole's pregnancy has been a huge learning experience, "I'm uncovering things every day. I'm buying all kinds of clothes I didn't know existed." Combs told People, "I didn't know what a bassinet was. But that's a thing, apparently. A lot of new words I'm learning."



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### Staff, Cashbox

Founded in Hawthorne, California in 1961, The Beach Boys were originally comprised of the three teenage Wilson brothers, Brian, Carl, and Dennis, along with their cousin Mike Love, and school friend Al Jardine. Bruce Johnston, Blondie Chaplin, Ricky Fataar, and David Marks were the musicians behind the voices. The Beach Boys signed with Capitol Records in July 1962, releasing their first album, "Surfin' Safari" that same year. Many of The Beach Boys hits include, *Surfin' USA*, *Good Vibrations*, *Barbara Ann*, *Kokomo*, *Fun, Fun, Fun*, *California Girls*, *Wouldn't It Be Nice*, and *I Get Around*.

The Beach Boys began as a garage band, managed by the Wilsons' father, Murry. Brother Brian became the composer, arranger, producer, and leader. In 1963 they had their first national hit with *Surfin' USA*. This was the beginning of a string of Top 10 singles, reflections of a Southern California youth culture of surfing, cars, and romance, dubbed the "California Sound." They were one of the few American Rock bands to sustain their commercial standing during the British invasion.

They would, somewhat, abandon beach-going themes for more personal lyrics and ambitious orchestrations. In 1966, the "Pet Sounds" album and *Good Vibrations* single raised the group's prestige as Rock innovators. Brian Wilson gradually conceded control of the group to his bandmates. Brother Carl took over as the band's musical leader. Albums from this period, too, enjoyed a cult following among fans. In the mid-1970s, as their concerts drew larger audiences, the band transitioned into an oldies act.

The Beach Boys are one of the most critically acclaimed and commercially successful bands of all time, with over one hundred million records sold worldwide. From the 1960s forward, the group has had over eighty songs charting worldwide, thirty-six of them in the US Top 40 (the most by a US Rock band), and four #1 songs. Their influence on other artists spans across musical genres and movements. Countless artists have cited the album "Pet Sounds" as their inspiration for creating their own musical masterpieces. The Beach Boys rank #12 of 100 Greatest Artists of All Time. They were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1988, as well



the recipients of The Recording Academy's Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award.

Band member Dennis Wilson drowned in 1983, while Carl Wilson passed away from lung cancer in 1998. The band granted Mike Love legal rights to tour under The Beach Boys name. In early 2010, the remaining original members briefly reunited for the band's 50th Anniversary. As of 2022, Wilson and Jardine do not perform with Love's edition of The Beach Boys, but remain official members of the band.



**The Beach Boys, circa 1966**  
**L-R: Al Jardine, Mike Love, Dennis Wilson, Brian Wilson and Carl Wilson**

With sixty years under their musical belt, The Beach Boys experienced a first in their legendary career. They made their debut at the historic Grand Ole Opry recently. Country band, LOCASH invited them to share the stage where they performed their current single, *Beach Boys* featuring Mike Love and Bruce Johnston. They followed up with performing the familiar iconic, *Fun, Fun, Fun*.

The Beach Boys are celebrating their first-time legacy song set, featuring Lorrie Morgan on, *Don't Worry Baby*, *Kokomo*, and *Good Vibrations*.

The boys are currently on tour celebrating their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Sixty Years of the Sounds of Summer 2022. On June 17, 2022 they released a newly remastered (twenty-four new mixes), expanded edition of The Beach Boys career-spanning greatest hits collection, "Sounds Of Summer: The Very Best Of The Beach Boys."

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Sunday Mornin' Country held their 40th year celebration at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville, Tennessee. This legendary event closed out CMA Fest on Sunday, June 12, 2022. The show featured great entertainment for the whole family as Country music artists came together to share their hearts as well as their favorite Gospel songs.

The vision for Sunday Mornin' Country began in June, 1980. Cowboy Joe Babcock, along with a group of Country music artists and musicians, wanted to honor God with the talents he had given them. Through prayer and dedication, they wanted to host a special event for Country music fans during the annual Country Music Fan Fair celebration (currently known as CMA Music Festival). Some forty-fifty singers, musicians, writers, producers, and promoters were involved in the first Sunday Mornin' Country, which is sponsored by Music City Christian Fellowship. The main purpose of Music City Christian

Fellowship and Sunday Mornin' Country is to share the love of Jesus Christ in testimony and song. Artists were asked again this year to share about their faith, and what being a part of this 40-year tradition means to them.

The founder of Music City Christian Fellowship, Cowboy Joe Babcock & The Babcocks performed, and Joe was honored with the Candlelight Award for his forty years of dedication and commitment to Sunday Mornin' Country. In his acceptance speech he stated, "We are still going strong after forty years. Besides singing with my family, I guess I am more proud of that than anything I ever done!"

The 40th celebration was filled with many special moments and highlights. It was hosted once again by longtime member of Sunday Mornin' Country, Little Miss Dynamite - Brenda Lee. Many great musical guests and performers included T. Graham Brown singing his testimony song, *Wine Into Water*. John Berry sang *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* accompanied by Steve Dorff. Season eighteen winner of The Voice, Todd Tilghman captivated the audience with his original song,



Cowboy Joe & the Babcocks

*Blood, Sweat and Her Tears.* The Fox Brothers sang *God Bless The USA* with special guests Rene Jones and The Color Guard. Nikki Headley performed the National Anthem. Other artists included The Tennessee River Boys, Chris Golden, Music City Quartet, Nadine from Larry's Country Diner, Music City Strings, and so many more special appearances. Pastor of Nashville Cowboy Church and sister of Johnny Cash, Joanne Cash Yates performed and gave the invitation, as the Country Chorale sang *Just As I Am*. All the artists, the band, and the Country Chorale kept the 40-year tradition with, *I'll Fly Away*. What a finale!



**The Fox Brothers with Rene Jones singing the National Anthem**

The producer of the event, Lynn Fox shared his thoughts on the 40th celebration. "It's surreal and unbelievable to produce such a show, seeing everything come together the way that it does. It's even better than I could have ever imagined. Such talented folks, and our Country Chorale was the best ever! Everyone was really blessed by being there."

Co-producer and Christian Country legend, Melanie Walker sang, *Get Up In Jesus Name* with Rene Jones, Darlene Chapman, Noel Walters and the Country Chorale. She stated, "It's such a privilege to be a part of something with such a rich history. It is built on the quote that Joe Babcock says, 'Sharing The Gospel Through The International Language of Music.' That's what we do with Sunday Mornin' Country, and we get to do it for the world, as the world comes to Nashville, Tennessee."

The newest member of the Grand Ole Opry, Charlie McCoy played a beautiful rendition of *The Lord's Prayer* as they honored the former artist of the show with a memorial tribute. From the Country Music Hall of Famer, "Joe Babcock recruited me years ago. He and I worked on Hee Haw together. The first time I did it, I said 'I love this!' I like what it stands for and what it means to me. If anybody has been blessed, I am the one. Imagine doing what you really love to do your whole life. That is a blessing!"

Lulu Roman has been with Sunday Mornin' Country since the beginning. Lulu has been sharing her testimony with the world for a long time. Speaking of the calling on her life, she shares, "Somewhere along the way, there is going to be many more names added to my list, that the Lord goes, 'See you helped bring that one in, and that one,

and that one. I believe with my whole heart I was born to be a soulwinner. That's why I am here, and a part of this."

Adam Warner made his second appearance and touched hearts with his song, *Someone God Can Use*. He says, "This is definitely a great organization and it's an honor to get the Word out there in this day and age. People are scared to talk about their beliefs. I have always been an outspoken person. I am definitely not afraid to share my faith and tell them about my Savior. Anytime you can get the Word out to just one person, you know you have done the right thing."

Alex Miller, along with help from The Tennessee River Boys sang an uplifting rendition of the old Hank Williams song, *I'm Gonna Sing*. "I started singing in church when I was three years old. I feel like this is giving back to all the

folks that let me sing in church. I feel very blessed and thankful that I was invited to be a part of this at the Grand Ole Opry house. I never thought in a million years I would be here, but a million years must go by pretty quickly!"

Brenda Lee is a veteran of Sunday Mornin' Country and has graciously hosted for several years. This music icon shares her faith as it reflects on her incredible career. "I have been so lucky, because of my age, to have worked with almost everybody in this industry, in all fields. My faith is why I am here. I shiver to think what my life would be like without Him. The Lord has blessed me in every endeavor in my life. He has been right beside me, along with my mama, all the way! It has been wonderful."

A staple of Sunday Mornin' Country has always been the choir of artists known as the Country Chorale, directed by performer and actor Mark



**Charlie McCoy**



**The cast and Country Chorale bring a grand finale**

Thomas. “Sunday Mornin’ Country makes for one of my favorite weekends of the year! It’s a real joy and honor to get to lead the Country Chorale that was established by my hero, Joe Babcock, some forty years ago! Folks come from all over the country to sing in the Country Chorale. It is a blast to get to know them, and to rehearse with them in preparation for worship! David said in 2 Samuel, that he would not offer something to the Lord that cost him nothing. Chorale members give of their time, their talents, and their financial resources as we rehearse and prepare. We have an awesome and joyful time using our mental energy to learn new songs, lyrics, harmonies, rhythms as well as our physical energy. It takes a lot of both energies for two fun, but intense, rehearsals. It’s an awesome experience to give back in song and praise the very breath that the Lord gives us, but to be able to do that corporately with seventy-five other brothers and sisters united



**Todd Tilghman**  
**‘The Voice’ winner**  
**(Season 18)**

through the power of the Holy Spirit, is so deeply meaningful and so very fulfilling!”

Sunday Mornin’ Country has something to offer everyone. Top Country artists and your favorite Gospel music blend together for a time of celebration and inspiration. It is great entertainment for the whole family, as the artists fill the auditorium with new encouragement. The event leaves fans and guests with an endearing memory of Nashville, one that will last a lifetime! Make plans to join Sunday Mornin’ Country June 11, 2023, Grand Ole Opry House, Nashville, Tennessee.

*www.musiccitychristionfellowship.org*  
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# KELLY LANG

## *She's Not Going Anywhere!*

The beautiful soul of Kelly Lang is not going anywhere, so sit back and enjoy the next few moments in getting to know this amazing music artist, up close and personal.

To say that Kelly Lang is simply a music artist is highly inaccurate. It is true that she is a remarkable singer/songwriter, nonetheless she also holds titles of producer, author, speaker, painter, and comedian. Kelly was born to perform.

**By Deborah Baliles**

One-year-old Kelly was right beside her dad when he became road manager for Conway Twitty. Many nights she would join him backstage for Twitty's shows, each night more thrilling than the one before.

"Living room performances" with her parents, gathered around a bonfire, or singing in a church service, Kelly knew music would be a significant part of her life. Lang was asked to perform on The Ralph Emery Show for the first time at the age of twelve. She was invited back more times, and eventually took Lorrie Morgan's place as a regular, weekly performer. One performance led to another, landing Lang an Ed McMahan Star Search winner three times (Star Search was today's American Idol), and a Billboard Top 100 for the single, *Lady, Lady*. CMT made the offer to film an official video of the song, putting it into heavy rotation. By the time Lang was fifteen, she was touring nationally and hitting almost every size stage.

While the name Kelly Lang may have some attachment to the Country music genre, she records, produces, and performs music that crosses many lines. All during childhood, Kelly's mom would have all types of music blaring throughout the house - a collection of Gladys Knight, Frankie Valli, and Elvis, and of course, there was always Conway.

Watching her dad work, Lang had a behind the scenes view of how the music business goes, fueling her desire to be a performer. Dad had his own set of strict rules for Lang, laying an essential foundation for what was expected of her. Dad's rules went something like this: Treat everyone with respect. Keep your grades high, your weight down. Make sure you are all "dolled up" anytime you are out in public. Instilling this discipline allowed Kelly to develop a strength of character that would serve her well in the music business.

Kelly on mom and dad, "My mom's love for all types of music undoubtedly gave me my love of all genres, and a great appreciation of the power of music in one's life. My dad was like a football coach. I guess he thought if I was going to be a professional artist, then I was to behave like one. I was an extension of him and certainly didn't want to let him down."

With Kelly being multi-talented, dipping into many layers, makes it hard to fit into just one type of talent, therefore, making it hard for the industry to know just what to do with her. Having dad's personal road manager connection to Conway Twitty, and Kelly being married to Country music legend, T.G. Sheppard, some assume that she has been handed opportunities. The reality is that, in some ways, more is expected of Lang and it has taken a lot of hard



work to gain the respect of the entertainment community and earn each of the accolades she has received amid those assumptions. One reward that she holds dear, a reward that cannot be swayed by peers, is when fans write and tell her that a song has blessed or moved them in some way.

These are but a few of the other highlights and memorable moments for Kelly Lang: Recipient of The Icon Award from The Southern Women in Film and Television. Numerous appearances on the world-famous Grand Ole Opry. Member of the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and the North American Country Music Hall of Fame. Performed *Islands In the Stream* with Sir Barry Gibb for Kenny Roger's induction into the Country Music Hall of Fame. Recorded duets with Olivia Newton-John, *How Can You Mend A Broken Heart*, Lee Greenwood, *Turns Me Inside Out*, and Paul Shaffer, *Last Date*.

The singer has shared the stage with Loretta Lynn, Sir Barry Gibb, George Strait, Lorrie Morgan, T.G. Sheppard, Ronnie Milsap, Mickey Gilley, Brenda Lee, George Jones, Ricky Skaggs, and so many others. The songwriter has written songs for Lorrie Morgan, Ricky Skaggs, T.G. Sheppard, Jerry Lee Lewis, The Oak Ridge Boys, B.J. Thomas, George Jones, Crystal Gayle, Johnny Lee, and William Lee Golden.

Moments beyond the music, the accomplished artist in oil paintings has works displayed in the homes of Oprah Winfrey, Sir Barry Gibb, Dame Olivia Newton-John, Larry the Cable Guy, and Justin Timberlake's parents. Lang is the creator of the hilarious comedic character, XOXO who has performed on national television, The Huckabee Show. Additionally, Lang is a former national spokesperson for Cindy Crawford's skin care line, Meaningful Beauty.

The author in Kelly Lang is in the form of her book, "I'm Not Going Anywhere." Within the chapters, readers will learn life lessons, find a way to smile though adversity, and watch a love story unfold between Lang and Sheppard, her Country music superstar. The reader has a front-row seat to her career in the spotlight, raising her daughters as a single mother, and learning how to keep a positive attitude, even when handed a terrible health diagnosis. The story of beating the odds with grace is powerful and dynamic, sure to soothe the soul of the reader.

Now a seventeen-year survivor, Kelly was diagnosed with Stage II breast cancer. While there have been many ups and downs for Kelly, this was, by far, the gamut of emotions. When asked in what ways cancer has affected her and/or how it has changed her, she responds, "I say that sometimes,

something that scary can be considered a death sentence. I chose to look at it as my life sentence. When I was going through cancer, I promised God, 'If you allow me to live, I would like to be a light for someone else going through this, and for my story to be seen as a ray of hope.'" Lang has brought comfort to countless cancer patients, down through the years, as both a singer and a public speaker.

In January 2020, *I'm Not Going Anywhere*, the song, was featured nationally in the commercial for Ascension Hospitals, with placement in front of The Oscars, The Superbowl, and Dancing With The Stars. The song was written, produced, and sang by Lang on her 2007 album, "11:11." It was featured, as well, in the movie, *The Deal*, with Burt Reynolds, (along with another Lang song, *How Does It Feel*). Who could have known that a song written some seventeen years ago, for a caregiver dealing with the serious illness of her husband, would one day be an inspiration source for Lang, at a time when she needed it the most? The evolution of a timeless song is nothing short of extraordinary.

Kelly has just released her version of *Midnight Train To Georgia*. This is the first of four singles offered ahead of the release of her next full-length album, "Old Soul II" - this album follows her prior cover album, "Old Soul." Lang enjoys

recording covers of iconic songs almost as much as her own works. "Each of these songs brings me back to a happier time. I try to honor the songs, and the artists, who came ahead of me. Singing their songs is a way to introduce the next generation to them.

While on the topic of the next generation or current world affairs, "I learned a long time ago that just because I have an opinion, doesn't mean I have to express it. I'd rather share my feelings through music, writing, painting, and comedy."


"When experiencing a Kelly Lang concert, be prepared to be taken on a musical journey through time, making you feel as you did when you first heard those classic hits, all the while introducing you to some new music. Now that you know a little more about me, know that I am not going anywhere, and I would love to see you soon!"

Until you see Kelly Lang in concert, she will be right here writing, recording, producing more music, expanding speaking engagements, and connecting with folks via her story, via her song.


[www.kellylang.net](http://www.kellylang.net)



**A 17-year breast cancer survivor, Kelly shares her story of healing and her musical journey that brought her through life's ups and downs in her new book, "I'm Not Going Anywhere."**



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# RICHARD LYNCH

## TALKS ABOUT HIS INSPIRATION BEHIND HIS CURRENT SINGLE, 'RADIO FRIEND'

By Michael Stover

Over the past three decades, Richard Lynch has compiled a long list of Country hits and chart-toppers on both domestic and international sales and radio airplay charts. He has recorded popular duets with legendary artists like Ronnie McDowell and Leona Williams as well as Grammy Winner, Rhonda Vincent. Richard is a proud member of the Ohio Country Music Hall of Fame and the Independent Country Music Hall of Fame.



When an artist like Richard writes a song, you can bet it is inspired by true events, real people, family, faith and country. The Waynesville, Ohio Country artist has released tributes to our military (*Love Tattoo* with Ronnie McDowell); his family (*Grandpappy, Daddy's Guitar*); and his friend, Doug Supernaw (*Supernaw*). His current single, *Radio Friend* is climbing the Christian Voice Magazine Country Gospel chart as well as the Cross Country USA Hot 100, and Richard shares his inspiration for the song.

He explains, "We had a very good family friend that recently passed away. Ray "Chubby" Howard was a lifelong friend of my dad's, and a member of the Steel Guitar Hall of



Fame. Chubby played all over the world, and he was a great supporter of my music. When he became a DJ on a local station here in Ohio, he continued to promote my songs, and I'm eternally grateful. *Radio Friend* is my way of saying 'Thanks' to Chubby. I was honored to have it played at his funeral."

He continues, "The inspiration for writing the song actually came from another friend and DJ on Real Roots Radio, Gary Cohn. When Gary retired, he made the comment on his last show, 'if I don't see you on the air, I will see you in the air.' Anthony Williams and I penned this song as a tribute to Gary and all of the incredible DJs that have played my music over the years. You are all my 'Radio Friends.'"

*Radio Friend* is planned for inclusion on the next Richard Lynch album, due later this year. A video tribute featuring photos of Chubby Howard, Gary Cohn and Richard Lynch is available on Richard's YouTube page.

Lynch is also the owner of Keepin' It Country Farm in Waynesville, Ohio and co-founder of Love Tattoo Foundation that assists veterans.

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—Richard Lynch, "Radio Friend"

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## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

# SAM BUTLER, JR.

By LaToya Scott

Family oriented, musically eclectic, and Grammy nominated are just a few words that describe the life and career of Sam Butler, Jr. Hailing from St. Petersburg, Florida, Sam is the second of ten children, born to Bishop Samuel (Sr.) and Loretta Butler. His musical talents were discovered early in his childhood, when at the tender age of four, Sam got his start singing in his home church, Church of the Living God World Wide Revival Center, Incorporated. From there, he, along with his family, became one of the opening acts for quite a few major names in R&B and Gospel music like The Staple Singers, the Dixie Hummingbirds, The Blind Boys of Alabama, and The Blind Boys of Mississippi.

In life, things always have a way of coming full circle. One of the very groups Sam shared a stage with during his childhood is who he later built a successful 25-year career with. Sam was the guitarist, arranger, producer and one of the lead singers for The Blind Boys of Alabama - a group founded in 1939 in Talladega, Alabama. Sam's vocal and instrumental skills helped to define the group's distinct sound, and they would go on to share the stage with the likes of Shirley Caesar, the Gospel Keynotes of Tyler, Texas, and The Mighty Clouds of Joy.

Taking a short break from performing with The Blind Boys of Alabama, Sam went on tour with Mick Jagger and The Rolling Stones. On that tour, he graced the stage alongside Dorothy Norwood as her background singer and guitarist. Dorothy is best known as one of the original members of the world-renowned group, The Caravans. Once the tour ended, Sam would return to performing with The Blind Boys of Alabama.

Once Sam permanently departed from The Blind Boys of Alabama, he began his solo career with a 12-track debut album entitled, "Raise Your Hands!," which was recorded with Severn Records. This album featured Sam's rendition of an array of spirituals previously written by some of the greatest in Rock and Roll music such as Bruce Springsteen, Tom Waits, Johnny Cash, and Eric Clapton. The album



included features from some notable instrumentalists: Roosevelt Collier, Marco Giovino, and Viktor Kraus, to name a few.

Although Sam is an accomplished Gospel artist, he has collaborated with some of the most legendary names across multiple genres of music. Over the course of Sam's career, he has been blessed to collaborate with the likes of Laurie Anderson, Chris Brubeck, Gary Katz, Keith Richards, guitarist for The Rolling Stones, Donald Fagan of Steely Dan, and Bobby Womack. He has been nominated for both a Grammy and two Dove Awards for his collaboration with Gospel artist Clarence Fountain of The Blind Boys of Alabama for the project "Stepping Up, Stepping Out," executive produced by Solomon Burke.

What makes the musical career of Sam Butler, Jr. even more interesting and unique is that he didn't simply stick with the traditional forms of singing and performing Gospel music. He diversified his music career with becoming an original cast member of the off-broadway play, "The Gospel at Colonus" - an African American musical adaptation of the Greek mythology story of Oedipus at Colonus, written by the ancient Greek tragedian, Sophocles. This musical was performed at the famous Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York and toured to several countries around the world. While performing as part of this cast, Sam worked alongside Academy Award winner Morgan Freeman and Golden Globe, Tony and Emmy Award nominated actor, Charles Dutton.

Sam continues to use his musical talents and expertise to spread the Gospel around the world. In recent years, he created a Gospel group with his wife Valerie, son Sam III, and two daughters - Shamara and Samia, blending both Traditional and Contemporary Gospel. One of the group's biggest and notable performances include appearing at The Blues Festival in New Orleans, Louisiana. In lieu of creating

a family group, Sam is continuing his solo career and embarking upon a few other endeavors.

Where some artists begin to slow down once reaching a certain age and level of achievement, God has opened even more doors for new and exciting opportunities in Sam's career. He's branching out and writing his first movie entitled "The Book of Clarence," about the life and death of his former group member, Clarence Fountain. In addition to his first charted single, entitled *Child of God* on Cashbox's Top 100, he recently released a new up-tempo single called *Dancing Round the Table*. And earlier this year in May, Sam was one of the highlighted performances at the Gospel Music FanFair, held at the Center for Rural Development in Somerset, Kentucky.

While he is currently pastoring at the Church of the Living God in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he has also partnered with Scott Enterprises & Media who is marketing him to a Southern Gospel audience, breaking him into yet another musical genre.

Sam's music is available to be downloaded on most streaming platforms.



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**The voice of the music runs deep, while the writing of the music runs even deeper. Don Stiles has been involved in Southern/Christian Country Gospel music since 1975, in one form or the other.**

# DON STILES

## The Man and His Music

**By Deborah Baliles**

**D**on started the group, The Labourers Quartet, with his uncle Donald Smith and family. The group sang at local churches and events from the 1970s through the 1980s. Like most other groups of the day, they would cover songs of The Hinsons, The Goodmans, The Rambos, The Hemphills, and other Gospel greats. Don's greatest influences were The Hinsons and The Goodmans as well as Walt Mills, Squire Parsons, Gordon Jenson, Dallas Holm, to mention a few. While with The Labourers, Don began to feel the call to write songs. Introducing these songs with old favorites the group were singing, somehow, Don's original songs found their natural place.

For the next thirteen years Don travelled with his own trio, The Don Stiles Trio, consisting of himself, and James and Mary Sugg from Marion, Arkansas. For a short time, Don also sang with son Chris, daughter Lisa, and daughter-in-law April.

However, the last several years has brought about an emotional, challenging, and most exciting change. Don took a giant leap, stepping out by faith, to go solo. Walking out as a solo artist has been challenging, but so rewarding. Don explains, "It was not a decision made lightly. I am so thankful for the support and prayer coverage of Kathy and our family. It is the goal and desire of this ministry to see souls saved, hearts lifted up, and lives forever changed in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Kathy and I are definitely partnering in this endeavor, as we seek the Lord daily for the direction this ministry should go. As partners in life and ministry, we have stood together, prayed for each other, and supported each other, working and rejoicing in the Lord." Don and Kathy love meeting all of the wonderful folks as they travel, willingly going wherever the Lord may lead.



As an artist, Don has garnered five number one songs, including his latest single, *Just Like That*. This song encompasses the ever-instant power of our Lord. The message in this new song conveys just how awesome and prevailing our Lord really is - and, He is concerned about every little thing in our lives. Don can testify to whatever you are facing, whatever life has dealt in circumstances or heartbreak, "If only you will trust in Him, hand it over completely to Him, He will deliver you, my friend - just like that. His desire is to *fix* us."

As a songwriter, Don cherishes the honor of two other artists that have carried his songs to #1, *It's Not So Hard To Praise Him* (The Wilburns), and *I've Got Something To Praise God For* (Cedar Ridge). Walt Mills recorded *Can't You Feel His Spirit In This Place*. Several other artists have recorded Don's music as well.

As far as career goes, Don has certainly had his music moments "in the sun." Foothills Gospel Music Convention presented awards to Don for 'Song of the Year,' 'Male Soloist of the Year,' and 'Songwriter of the Year.' In May, he was named 'Favorite Songwriter' in the 2022 Gospel Music Fan Awards. In Don's own words, "As far as awards go, whenever I see or hear that someone has given their heart to the Lord because of a song I may have written, well, that means everything to me. Winning souls is what it is all about! I constantly struggle with how many ways can God use us, being wholly led by the Holy Spirit."

Don's day, year, and life are made when someone shares how a song has blessed them, especially when those



confirming words come from another artist. These things remind Don of just how awesome God really is. "Spiritual or inspirational moments come when I am alone and meditating on God's goodness." Don continues, "I find myself going through a tough time, when all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit tells me, 'Jesus went to Calvary for you and He is not about to let you down now!'" Usually that is when a new song rises up in Don, flowing into lyrics and music.

As Minister of Music in his local church and travelling to share the Gospel, Don has to firmly uphold that our very resolve is being tested every day, be it cultural, social, moral, or even spiritual. His simple philosophy, "Stay focused and be about our Father's business, all the while maintaining our integrity, always doing the right thing."

Observance from a Facebook friend, Don is ever commending and/or encouraging fellow artists. He acts as that comforting, inviting, and peaceful colleague. Isn't that how it should be for all travelling on this same Gospel journey?

The mission of Don Stiles' ministry is to win souls for the Kingdom of Heaven. His ultimate goal is making Heaven his home, taking along as many folks with him as possible. The mission and message have never changed. Fans can always expect to hear the Gospel message in every song that is sung. Don and Kathy would love to come sing and minister at your church or event, ever lifting up the name of Jesus.



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# Michael Coleman

the metropolitan cowboy

## See Your Shadow Songwriting Project

**By Michael Stover**

**M**ichael “Metropolitan Cowboy” Coleman is a man of many talents. Not only is he the brains behind See Your Shadow Songwriting, a project dedicated to producing a delectable variety of songs and art, but he’s also a screenplay writer and even an award-winning darts player. With a long career, a great work ethic and a fascinating number of stories, the Phoenix-based artist has never had long to dawdle.

Despite his storied career, by far his most ambitious endeavor so far would have to be all his continuing efforts in pushing the See Your Shadow project further. Quite unlike many other music projects, See Your Shadow is unique in that it’s less of a simple band project and more like a network of musicians collaborating together to produce great art with Michael at the helm.

As Michael puts it, See Your Shadow is more like a pyramid. While he sits at the top as the creative brain of songwriting and project conceptualization, he works together with what he calls the See Your Shadow Network of Stars to put songs together. Without the support of all the musicians and vocalists who support him, See Your Shadow would not be where it is today.

See Your Shadow Songwriting’s legacy has grown as of late, becoming something of a shining star in the world of Country and Americana music. Michael proudly touts how See Your Shadow was one of the first musical acts to ever combine Country and Western music with Hip-Hop influences long before the looming presence of Bro Country.

It’s something he feels they do not get enough credit for, among other things.

He also bemoans how Country charts treat diversity in Country music as something new, even though he has been a prominent black artist in the genre for many years now. While it’s a positive change within the Country music industry, it’s still a disservice to ignore those who have championed this change like Michael himself.

By extension, Michael finds the music industry’s lack of recognition for talent quite frustrating. As a common collaborator, he always meets talented artists who put passion and effort into their music. Despite this, their work tends to go unnoticed by the industry at large, therefore becoming difficult for many artists to keep moving forward with their work.

Still, despite all his grievances, he’s very proud of what See Your Shadow have achieved. For a project like theirs to achieve international levels of success and multiple number one iTunes hits is staggering to say the least. He joyfully recounts his proudest moment in music being how See Your

Shadow was named 'Alternative Artist of the Year' by The Internal Music Association for their song *I Will Tell Jesus You Said Hello*.

On a lighter note, Michael also talks about their current single, *Missing West Virginia*, a song about how one can never truly escape where they're from. According to the man himself, West Virginia in of itself is a metaphor to describe one's origin, with poetic writing to fit the theme. He discusses how the song has managed to become a success thanks to its combination of old school Country with modern contemporary arrangements.

These creative changes and efforts are what truly set See Your Shadow apart from many other Country artists. Whereas most are comfortable staying in their lane, Michael and See Your Shadow are always looking towards the next big thing. Stagnating is the worst fate for an artist, and Michael knows this, always working on the project's next step. He says, "What keeps me up at night is I'm constantly thinking about what is next. I mean I am constantly doing so many different things throughout all my various enterprises that my mind is always going. I mean I work a lot. I always joke that I work so much, I even work in my sleep and sometimes, that really is the truth."

Even now, Michael is thinking about what's next for his project. He's been working hard on getting his screenplay produced for starters, expanding into a new and untapped

creative market. On top of that, he thinks it would be a great idea to make a See Your Shadow retrospective, covering the grand scope of all the things his project has accomplished over the years.

Above all else, See Your Shadow will always focus on making the high quality Country music that you can't find anywhere else. Michael strives to write music that can help capture the every day feelings that a normal person experiences. Exploring these grounded, human themes through music is one of the fundamentals of See Your Shadow songs, and it works well for them.

Despite it all though, Michael stays humble and grounded. He's still just a person, one who loves to travel and pushes for women's rights where he can. While his work ethic and creativity are admirable, it's his ability to write and level with his listeners that truly shines through. As long as he holds on to that, we're sure See Your Shadow will always have a bright future ahead of it.

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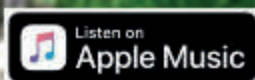
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## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Tia McGraff isn't your average artist. Hailing from Southern Ontario, Canada, Tia is an internationally renowned singer, an award-winning songwriter, and an accomplished author. As a performer, her passion is unmatched by her peers, and with years of experience under her belt, she knows how to put on a great show for her audiences. But who is Tia McGraff exactly, beyond the years of artistry and effort?



Like many budding artists, she gained her music interest from her family, primarily her grandmother. Hailing from Transylvania, Tia's grandmother would emigrate to Canada in the year 1930. Her beautiful voice would inspire Tia to sing, eventually pursuing music as a full-time career. Carrying the dreams of both herself and her grandmother was the needed push to cement her dreams of being a singer/songwriter artist.

- In order to attain that dream, she would make the move from Canada to Nashville, the epicenter of classic Americana music. Moving to Nashville would be that all-important first step to a thriving career. With her growing knowledge of music, rising confidence, and unbridled talent, it was only a matter of time before the Tia McGraff name was becoming Nashville-notable.

- Of course, that's not all. Tia is wholeheartedly supported by her husband, Tommy Parham who serves double duty as her co-writer. Tommy is an important part of every Tia performance, helping her grow and learn as a musician, while his melodies and ideas inspire her. Too, his ability to pick up new editing and recording tricks help to keep the duo's music fresh and with-the-times.

- Together, Tia and Tommy have earned their fair share of awards and achievements. Tia won the emPower Posi Music Award in 2021 for her single, *Go Your Own Way*. This was a huge achievement for the talented singer/songwriter. She also won awards for Americana CD of the Year, and has earned multiple nominations from other music related awards shows.

- Outside of music, Tia and her husband also share a deep love for animals. The two often volunteer to help save dogs, birds, turtles, and all sorts of God's creations. The two have even volunteered to study endangered species like whippoorwills and acoustic bats. The couple finds both of their shared interests, love of music, and love of animals, almost equally rewarding.

- Additionally, Tia is featured predominantly on the "Jake's Place Songs 'n' Tails," where she discusses music, up and coming artists, and her own personal thoughts on every day topics. It is a solid change of pace from making her own music, but her seasoned input proves valued and respected to discussions.

- What Tia truly loves, however, is making music for her fans, giving them an anchor to connect emotionally. She finds nothing more satisfying than touching the hearts of her fans through her work. It's rewarding to her, and according to the artist herself, it's her favorite part of being an artist.

"My favorite part of being a musician are the smiles and tears we bring to our audiences. Just to know that we have touched their hearts and made a difference in the lives of our "fans" - fans who have become more like family over the years. This is priceless."

So, what is Tia up to now? Not one to rest on her laurels, Tia is hard at work with her latest project to be released soon, the "With Love" EP. It is set to feature all new music, as well as the single, *Go Your Own Way*. Though, we know that even after that, Tia will keep pushing to make herself a success. She carries the dreams of many people with her, and shows no indication of ever slowing down.

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# Those Cotton Pickin' Kids!

By Robin Tanner



**A**s the saying goes, "Bluegrass is the best music because it sounds the same when the power goes out!"

The Cipollaris are a family of thirteen who grew up singing and playing Bluegrass music. The Cotton Pickin' Kids consist of six siblings, with dad playing the upright bass. Each child was taught early on to play a variety of instruments - the guitar, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, harmonica, or whatever was lying around. They would often play for family and social gatherings. Their loving parents are Fabio and Elizabeth Cipollari. Let's meet these talented youngsters.

The youngest of the Cotton Pickin' Kids is eleven-years-old, Giovanni Cipollari, and he plays the dobro. He started playing the cigar box guitar when he was six, then picked up the dobro at age seven. He placed first in the Nashville, Tennessee State Fair Beginner Musician competition.

Gianluca Cipollari is twelve-years-old and plays banjo. He started out on the harmonica before learning the banjo. He has placed in the Beginner Musician competition at the Tennessee State Old Time Fiddlers Convention, Athens State University, in addition to placing at Bluegrass on the Harpeth in Franklin, Tennessee.

At age thirteen, Rosalinda Cipollari likes to play harmony fiddle, while singing harmony and lead.

Cecilia Cipollari is fifteen-years-old, playing guitar from the time she was ten. She plays backup and finger-picking guitar in the band, and has backed up all her siblings in rhythm for all competitions.

The oldest daughter of the Cotton Pickin' siblings is seventeen-years-old, Therese Cipollari. She started playing

the fiddle at the age of eight. She has been playing in the band since 2017, and sings lead vocals. She wrote, My Sweet Home, an original song about her home in Alabama.

The oldest son of the family band is nineteen-year-old Savio Cipollari. He plays guitar, bass, banjo, but the mandolin is his favorite. He has composed several instrumentals for the band.

Collectively, the family band placed first in the Nashville, Tennessee State Fair Bluegrass Band competition, 2019. The family band has done well placing in Bluegrass band competitions in both categories, singing and playing. They enjoy playing together as a family band and love being creative with their musical arrangements.

The Cotton Pickin' Kids' most recent accomplishments would be their highly popular Facebook page and their YouTube videos. They have 67,000 subscribers on YouTube and 80,000 followers on Facebook. Their video of the Bluegrass instrumental, Foggy Mountain Breakdown has reached several million views on both social media platforms. They are also in



the process of recording their own Christmas album, hopefully to be released before Christmas of this year.

"We are a family of music lovers that want to share our musical passion with the world." On one occasion a gentleman asked Fabio "Papa" Cipollari what was the name of their band. Fabio laughed, "We don't have one yet." The man responded, "Well those cotton pickin kids can sure pick!" "That is how we got our name. We are so grateful for being born and raised in such a large and loving family, smack dab in the heart of Alabama. You really can't ask for much more than that. We are truly "Cotton Pickin' Blessed!"

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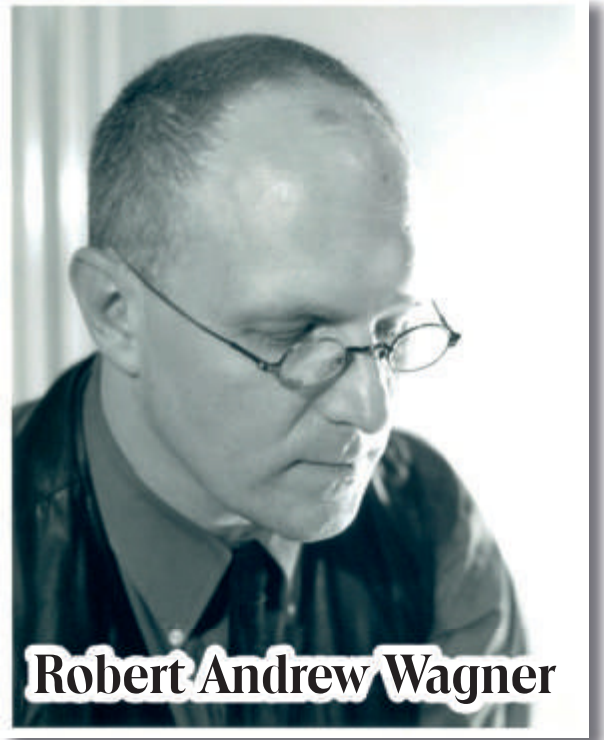
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## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

The Little Wretches isn't your typical band, acting outside the bounds of your average musical act. With punk music as their genre, the band has always pushed the boundary when it comes to using music to broach touchy and sensitive topics. It's not easy being a musical act trying to make a big difference in the world, but Robert Andrew Wagner of the band believes it's a worthy endeavor.



With his music, Robert wants to truly be able to speak directly to the hearts and souls of his viewers. Even as a child, Robert had always found the idea of helping those in need to be his calling. He would idolize the ideals superheroes like Superman and Mighty Mouse represented. But of course, the young artist had to work towards these goals, and work towards them he did.

After some time, the young Robert wanted to take his writing to a new audience. Debating different platforms like poetry or novel writing, he'd eventually land on music as his platform of choice. Believing that music can change the world, he now makes his own music, doing his best to make a change and help those in need.

His never ending pursuit for justice in the world has led him to making twelve albums, gaining a solid cult-audience in the meantime. The only thing that matches his diligence in making new records is his efforts in touring and performing, as he's always playing new shows whenever possible. Within ten years, Robert hopes to see The Little Wretches spoken in the same breath as artists like Steve Earle.

While music is his pursuit, Robert also doesn't limit himself. He mixes many different influences into his life, with a love for many different things. Many of his hobbies are artistic in nature, like his love for theater, film, literature and art. At the same time, he's also a big fan of outdoors activities, and as an activist, he always keeps up with politics, news and even more abstract topics like philosophy and religion.

As an artist, there's nothing Robert loves more than showing an audience something powerful and rare. There aren't many artists who can truly command the attention of a crowd with music, and every moment that The Little Wretches manages to achieve this is when Robert gets to truly envelop himself in his craft.

The Little Wretches' latest album, "Red Beets & Horseradish" is Robert's proudest work so far. As a natural storyteller, Robert is at most in his element spinning interesting stories with greater messages behind them, and that makes up the bulk of the new album's runtime. Robert feels a form of responsibility in being the one telling the world about these stories, because if not him, who?

Elaborating further, Robert opens up on the difficulties when it came to making the album. Between COVID related struggles ruining entire recording sessions and the piano tracks being recorded in a completely different studio, "Red Beets & Horseradish," was a struggle to make happen.

Through all these trials and tribulations however, a jewel was born, with it being the band's most critically acclaimed release yet. For an album chock-full of meaningful symbolism and deep messages, the album has now become the band's crowning achievement, and Robert couldn't be happier with this. But ultimately, as with all his work, even this album is about giving back to those who need it.

By the very nature of his work, Robert works with many kids who are social outcasts, abandoned by their parents, neglected and abused. For the artist, these kids are the ones he needs to help the most, and he spends a lot of his time trying to connect with them. To enrich and empower their lives is a big step in achieving his goals, and he's pushing forward with full force.

To this end, Robert wants nothing more than to see love and good values prevail in the world. He wants to see the future generation be provided with good examples by their parents, and he wants to see them enjoy life while respecting others. It's a touching sentiment, and one that we can't help but agree with.

[www.littlewretches.com](http://www.littlewretches.com)



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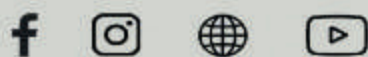
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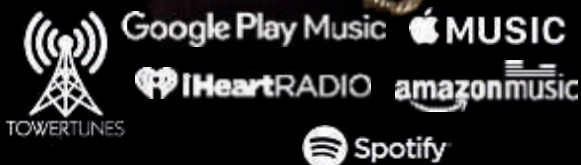
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When your story begins with, “I grew up loving Country music and was really influenced by my grandmother who played piano in church,” you know you are about to be introduced to some sweet, real Southern Country charm. Rural Alabama gives you Country singer/songwriter, Shane Owens.

## shane owens

## Sweet, Southern, Country Charm

By Deborah Baliles

The Owens family were all involved in singing in the church choir. But come Saturday night, that same family would gather around listening to the Grand Ole Opry. It was Country music at its finest. Shane held on to his great appreciation for Country music until his late teenage years. In his early twenties, he would come into his own interest of creating music and singing, still keepin’ it country.

Right out of high school, Shane bought his first guitar and joined a band. “I am one of those self-taught guitar players. I learned by ear, one might say. As time passed, I formed my own band and learned to book myself.”

The gigs became more frequent and the crowds got bigger. A music career was falling into place for Shane. Along his career path, he would look to his biggest influences who were always in rotation on the family’s sound system - Keith Whitley, Randy Travis, George Strait, George Jones, Merle Haggard, and Alan Jackson. Well, maybe not so much George Jones in the rotation; George rode with grandfather in his truck! Still, just as influential.

Shane would ultimately land on the Grand Ole Opry stage where he received a return invitation. From there, he has opened for some of the biggest names in Country music, a list far too long to pen. Shane took the title of 2018 ‘Independent Artist of the Year,’ he was Rolling Stone’s ‘Top 10 to Watch,’ had a Top 50 Billboard hit, and has several Top 40 charting singles in Music Row. As well, he has guest appeared on Fox and Friends, RFD TV, Larry’s Country Diner, Jimmy Bowen’s Nashville Shows, and the Hallmark

Channel. Owens’ *Country Never Goes Out Of Style* was featured on Netflix’s *The Ranch*, season three.

The touring road can get rough and tiring, especially being away from family and friends. Even so, when Shane steps in front of an audience, he entertains at his highest level. He is fueled by watching the crowd sing his songs, word by word, enjoying every minute of the music. Shane falls back on the lessons he has learned from some of the best, veteran entertainers, “The biggest thing I have learned, and forever learning, is patience. This is a tough business. I have been knocked down so many times, but because of my love of Country music, I keep getting right back up, and keep on performing! Persistence and determination are a must in this business.”

Should Shane ever have a moment of self-doubt, he only has to look at his own website to refire his motivation. You know you have something worth pursuing when one is validated in such a way, and by an absolute Country music legend: “*Shane Owens brings it all... vocal, writing, performance, and passion. He has paid his dues, remained committed to traditional Country and brings you a song with heart, and a story. Songs that will get you through the tough times to enjoy the happy times. Lyrics that will remind you of the threads in life that make you the fabric you are today. He will bless you with his talent and his kindness. To Shane, I gladly pass the baton...*” - Randy Travis

Shane’s latest single, *You Go Good* is climbing its way up the music charts. It is one of those up-tempo songs that will have one replaying it over and over. “I’m so excited about

the new single,” says Shane. “It will have you tapping your foot and singing along. Hope you all enjoy!” From his press release: Country music singer/songwriter, Shane Owens puts his Southern charm on display with the release of *You Go Good*. Owens’ lyrics prove how some things just fit perfectly together, whether they are a likely pair or not – like how a “Sunday needs a sermon,” or as opposite as Hollywood and red clay Georgia, all he knows is *you go good* with me. Owens’ distinct vocals shine on this sweet tune, delivering the perfect country song.

Shane is not slack concerning his music purpose. He is constantly ploughing his dreams to yield a string of Top 10 hits, all the while headlining his own tour. Somehow all of this seems entirely possible.

Stepping aside momentarily from the music, Shane reveals his heart, “First and foremost, I am a God-fearing man.” Shane is a man who believes in doing what’s right, and will passionately defend what he believes. He is also a man who will adamantly oppose that which he believes is blatantly wrong. “I am very patriotic, respecting and appreciating all those who have served our Country, past, present, and future. We all should be about God, family, and our America.”

Don’t miss out on a Shane Owens performance. Fans can anticipate a fun-filled, entertaining happening – all loaded up with real Country music, and real Southern charm.

[www.shaneowenscountrymusic.com](http://www.shaneowenscountrymusic.com)

*“Shane Owens’ You Go Good instantly transports you to a 90s honky-tonk. Its classic, catchy rhythm gets you moving and ready to dance with the one you love.” - The Country Note*

*“You Go Good by Shane Owens is a perfect feel good, summer song to jam out to, with the windows down or anywhere! Way to go Shane for putting out that summer hit!” - Travis Bryan, The Live Show WEKT, Elkton, Kentucky*

*“The perfect summer ride along...you will be car dancing the whole trip with this one!” - Devon O’Day, Host, Main Street Today*

*“Shane Owens brings us a new song, You Go Good reminds us why we love 90s Country music so much – mid-tempo, under three minutes, positive, and a song about love. And, the vocal is mixed perfectly against a dynamic Country groove. Shane Owens, you go good on the radio!” - Dennis Banka, WUCZ, Carthage, Tennessee*

*“Shane Owens gives a solid performance with a vocal delivery that is all Country. This is a great cruising song with a strong hook. I found myself thumping my steering wheel to it. It will take people like Shane Owens to keep the traditional Country music pure at heart.” - Joe Don Baker, 95.1 Everything Country, North Carolina*

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# dixie revival

## Keepin' it Real

Matthew (Matt) Branch, Holly Robinson-Branch, and Stephen Robertson are the three incredibly talented entertainers that collectively make up the Dixie Revival, a Positive Country band. All three of these North Carolina natives started their musical journeys at a young age.

By Robin Tanner / Photos by Chelsea Venable ©2022

**G**rowing up in church as a pastor's kid, Matt found his love for music as he played and sang in his dad's church. Eventually performing at other area churches, he formed a Contemporary Christian band known as No Compromise. (It was during this time that he met Holly Robinson, who would later become his wife.) A few years later, he planted his Country roots forming a band called Coldshot.

Holly has been singing Gospel music most of her life, having began performing in churches at the young age of eight years old. As a solo artist, she was the youngest person in SGMA history to have a hit song on the Southern Gospel Top

40 charts. Later, she was a member of the Southern Gospel trio, 3 for 1, alongside Brad Hudson, Trenton Wood, and later, Stephen Robertson.

Growing up, Stephen would sing for special occasions and was always eager to learn all he could from his favorite singers. Holly recalls seeing Stephen at many 3 for 1 concerts in his local area over the years. In fact, when one member departed 3 for 1, Stephen auditioned for the part and easily got the job.

Stephen's superb vocal capabilities reflect his Country roots and his faith upbringing. While remaining a member of Dixie Revival, he also enjoys performing as a solo artist. He

is married to Brandi Robertson, who is Dixie Revival's merchandise manager and assists with the band's website and social media. They have a daughter, Bailey.

Looking back over the history of these individuals, it becomes clear that God was orchestrating relationships and molding friendships to bring Holly, Matt, and Stephen together in ministry for a long time.

Matt and Holly have been married since 2015, and she says it's the greatest blessing to have such a life partner to share in music and ministry together. "We have a love for music, but never more than the love we have for each other. All that we've been through to get us to this point makes us appreciate each other even more."

Matt and Holly are the proud parents of four beautiful children – Nevaeh, Rylie, Preston, and Coleman. When not on the road, they are a part of the music program at Temple Baptist Church in Gastonia, North Carolina.

Few may know that the trio actually started out in Country music in 2012, forming the band, Dixie Still. They toured consistently through 2015, until the band made the decision to focus more on the recording side of the music business. Matt and Holly had just taken over management of Son Sound Music Group and Tire Swing Records in Bessemer City, North Carolina where they'd turn their focus on helping other artists with the production of their music.

But, according to the group, when the love of performing and the love of music is in your blood, the "calling" of the stage never goes away. After several years away from the music stage, the trio is "Revived" to share their blessings, struggles, and testimonies among so many that are desperately searching for something of encouragement. With deep southern, Christian roots, led by the desire to encourage others, the trio is bringing a positive faith-based, Country music message to churches, community events, and family-friendly venues as Dixie Revival.

Dixie Revival's recent single, *Dash Between The Dates* has climbed to the number 10 position on Cross Country USA's Christian Country Hot 100 for February, officially making it a "Top 10" hit. The song is also charting well in Cashbox Magazine and on Christian Voice Magazine's Country Gospel Top 100. "It is one of those songs that makes you think about living, instead of merely existing," the band explains, "It is not about the date we are born or the date we die that defines us. It is all about how we live in the middle (the dash between the dates) and the legacy we leave behind."

Their most current single making its way to radio now is a song entitled, *Good Time*. This upbeat tune will bring a smile to listeners faces as the lyrics recall a simpler time of days gone by when the old-time saints would sing the hymns and clap joyfully in church. Both this single and the aforementioned *Dash Between The Dates* are included on

Dixie Revival's album, "The Walk." The band has just released their brand new album, "This Side Of Heaven."

Each member of Dixie Revival feels it is important to be "real," as they sing and minister to people from all walks of life, Christian and non-Christian alike. Matt explains, "Many people look down on tattoos, piercings, facial hair, things of that nature... especially if you work in a church. I have tattoos that are meaningful to me. I was talking to a guy in service one day and he said, 'Matt I was a little nervous about coming to this church. I hadn't been out of prison long and I didn't know if I would be accepted here. I wasn't sure if people could look beyond my past or my tattoos. Then I saw you sing and play your guitar on stage and saw your tattoos and I knew if God and the people would accept you ministering on stage then I could be accepted as well.' A lot of people have closed the door to folks that have that similar experience."



Sometimes religious people are so closed minded to the fact that Jesus detested that there were rules and regulations that were forced on people for hundreds of years. That was His message, I come to set you free from all that. It doesn't matter how you appear on the outside, what matters is how you appear on the inside. It was during that moment I knew that was my passion for what Christ wanted me to be doing and to keep doing it that way."

Holly adds, "It's always something like that. It's the people you would not expect to be there that come up to you and that can identify with you. That is why God calls us to do that. We don't have to be something we are not to minister. We just have to tell our story. That's what we are trying to do!! It's not about a bus or a song on the charts. We don't care about those kinds of accolades. We want to be real and tell our story, our experiences, and our heartbreak. Ultimately,

that's why we go through what we go through. We all have a story and with all our experiences we can really do some good for others if we are just willing to tell it. We've been there... so we can say it's going to be ok. We can help them through our music."

"We have all been given second chances to come together and do this for all the right reasons," Matt continues, "Holly had great success with 3 For 1 working with the Gaithers and Charles Stanley. Then Stephen and I joined with Holly and did the Country record in Nashville and traveled for a few years and it just didn't seem to work. I got it in my head it was over musically. I fell into a bad depression and started struggling with alcohol and had a heart attack at 36 years old. When I came out of that, I told God, 'You called me to do music in some form or fashion.' We thought it was because He needed good people in Country music but that's probably not the answer. I said, 'If this is what you want, just make a way for it.' Then doors started opening. Our first and foremost desire is whatever He wants for us. I know for the three of us it's spreading the message in Positive Country Music."

Stephen shares his testimony: "I was saved when I was twelve. I was shy by nature as far as singing in church, but one day I just went for it and the rest is history. We've got to sing at really cool places with great people but the one that stands out to me was recently at a special acoustic concert. There was a biker friend of ours who didn't attend church much. That night we sang some new songs we just recorded and afterwards he came to us with big crocodile tears rolling down this grown man's face. It really touched him. For me, that did more than anything we have done. That said to me we are on the right track and doing the right thing. Jesus went to places where others would not go and loved people others of would not love. I want to go where God wants us to go." As would be evident, all members of the group have been successful in their own rights. Together with their very talented band (Josh Etchison - lead guitar, Caleb Etchison - piano and keys, Michael Miller - bass guitar, and Nathan Rogers - drums and percussion), they are unstoppable in producing and performing great music that will last for generations.

Dixie Revival is where it is today due to their passion and professionalism. Respectfully, independently and collectively, they've more than "paid their dues" with countless hours spent perfecting already exceptional talents to be the very best that they can possibly be. Eclectic backgrounds and the combined influences of Rock and Country to Southern Gospel and Contemporary Christian music has forged the sound that is Dixie Revival.

Dixie Revival is most definitely singing, playing and living out the proper definition of revival - a new presentation of something old. Revival is sweeping the Southeast! A Dixie Revival!

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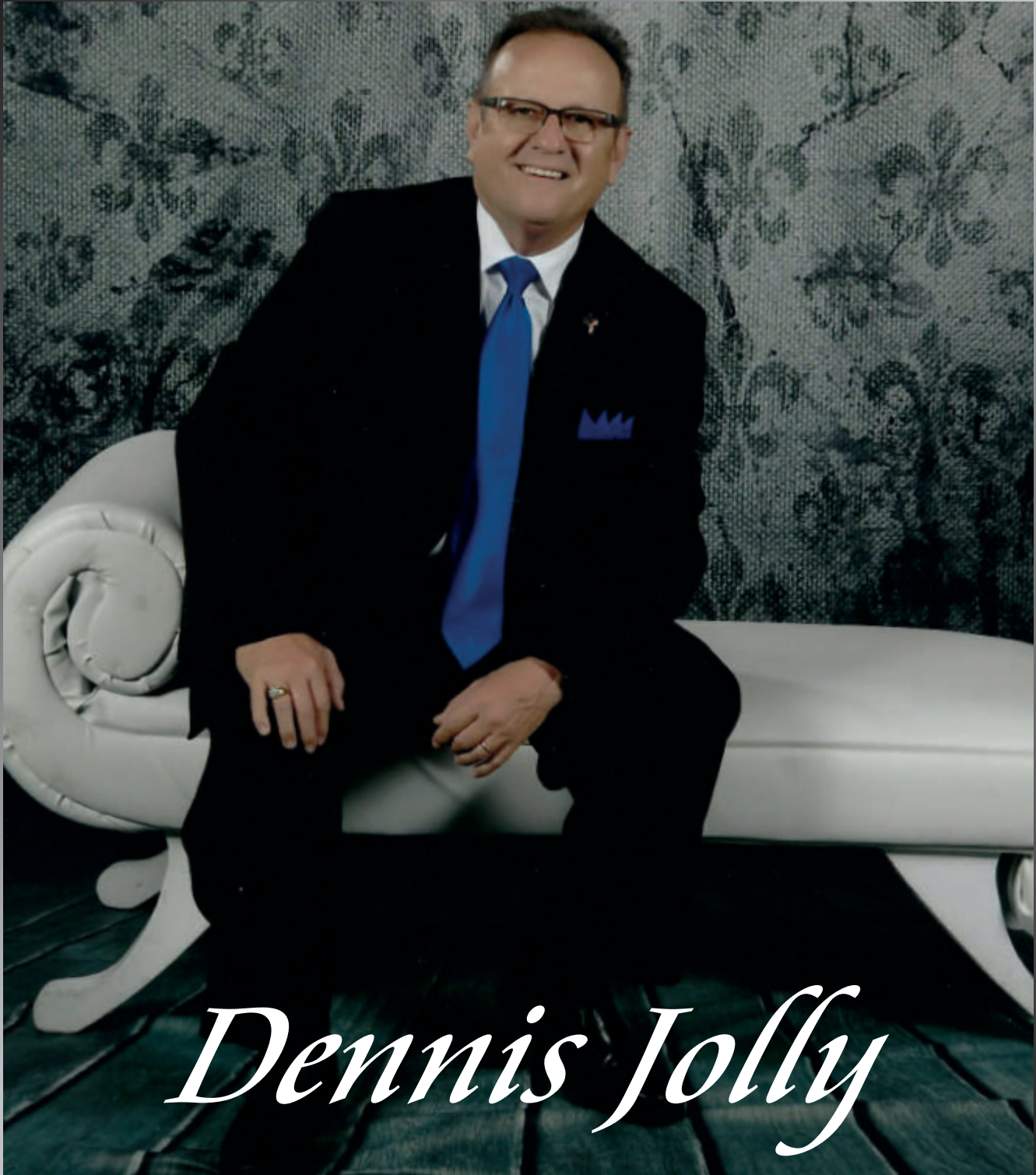


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# DONNA KILMURRAY

*Donna Kilmurray is proof that a life story is rewritten every day. The amazing part of it all is watching as God adds to the story, erases from the story, and refashions the character along the way. Yes, God can do that.*

By Deborah Baliles

## The Author and Finisher

Donna and her husband, Kevin reside in Ada Oklahoma. With a later in life faith walk, Donna cannot boast of growing up in the church. At a very young age, her family took a backseat from the church world. Later, while in college, God began to knock on her heart's door, urging her to find the way back to church, and to Him. Donna surrendered her life to Christ at a revival in the fall of 1996.

With wholly surrender of heart to the Lord, Donna would surrender her gift of music and song the following year as well. Donna had lived a dream of moving to Nashville to pursue a County music career. Her twenty-first birthday seemed like a good time to tell her family about the decision to follow God, sing Christian music, and *not* make the move to Nashville. The news was not supportively received by the family as one would hope. Dad was supportive, but mom wanted for her daughter to pursue a career and "make it big" in Country music. Feeling like she was the root of the WWW III contention among the family, Donna stepped away from all music, except for singing a little here and there at church.

Still trying to figure it all out, Donna taught math in middle and high schools while obtaining a Master's degree in nursing. A full-time nurse, going on fourteen years, supports her traveling ministry for now. Donna's prayer is to one day be full-time in ministry and hopes that is in God's soon timing.

A choir director believed in Donna in the third grade, granting her first solo. To this day, the director still calls Donna, "the girl with the big voice." Donna received a college vocal scholarship while in high school, allowing her to pursue a degree and study classical vocal style.

With no shortage of musical influences, dad would acquaint Donna to an array of styles and genres - Classic Rock, Jazz, Country, Big Band, and Classical, "I pretty much loved them all!"

Album firsts for Donna were Donny & Marie Osmond, "Going Coconuts," Dolly Parton, "Here You Come Again," Peaches & Herb, "Reunited," and Donna Summer, "Bad Girl." Donna will admit the move to Oklahoma has somewhat shifted her music influences to include Reba McEntire, Martina McBride, and Trisha Yearwood. In finding Christ, more influences would come in the form of Janet Paschal, Karen Peck, The Hoppers, Michael W. Smith, Chris Tomlin, Point of Grace, and The Gaithers. She mentions, "My heart leans to Christian Country and Southern Gospel."

Donna's career has reached some impressive milestones. She finished in the top ten Singing News Ultimate Talent Search (2017) and placed second in the Tina Sadler Songwriting Contest. Donna attained the GMAA 'Female Vocalist' (2018), CGMA Silver Heart and Gold Heart 'Horizon Female Vocalist' (2018), and CGMA Silver Heart and Gold Heart 'Female Vocalist' (2019), in addition to being in the top ten for 'Female Horizon Vocalist' with ICGMA (2019 & 2020).

The year 2021 began an amazing new chapter for Donna as she was awarded CGMA Silver Heart 'Acapella Artist of the Year,' Silver Heart 'Female Vocalist of the Year,' Silver Heart 'Entertainer of the Year,' and Silver Heart 'Favorite Artist.' She has also opened for artists Jason Crabb, Jana Jaye, and Wanda Jackson.

Donna's personal highpoints have allowed for meeting several of her musical inspirations. More importantly, she has



recorded her first Gospel album and so hopes that it makes an impact on many lives. She says, “A ministry joy is the first time of hearing one of my songs being played on the radio, and then seeing my first song charting. I love being in ministry, but it can be challenging at times, and in many ways. Worth it all, to keep on keeping on for Christ!”

Fully aware that one cannot always see the fruits of seeds planted, “But, oh, what a celebration it is, making my heart leap for joy, when I personally get to witness to and lead someone to Christ.” Like so many traveling ministries, for now, Donna is facing the challenge of “church doors opening.” However, Facebook has momentarily become the mainframe for her to spread the Good News.

Donna’s most requested song, which was a previous single, *The Day John Williams Lost Religion* had great success for her. It is a timeless song of our need for a personal relationship with Christ, our Lord and Savior. Eternal life is not guaranteed by being a good person or doing good deeds. Many religions, but only one truth. Only a matter of the heart will determine standing face-to-face with Christ and to hear, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Or, I never knew you, depart from me.” Donna declares, “I know what I want to hear! How about you? I first heard this song in the early 90s by an artist, Kristy Henley. I fell in love with it and knew that one day, I would be recording it. A catchy turn with a powerful message, a rewind for this day and time.”

Donna’s single, *At The Foot Of The Cross* is the best of follow ups. Donna already knew the chorus, but the rest of the song would come from a real-life event. The ECU campus came under attack by a national organization, asking that all Christian paraphernalia including pews, bibles, the altar, and the cross be removed from the chapel. They stated that the cross was an offensive symbol, when in fact, the cross is the ultimate symbol of peace and unity, forgiveness, love, redemption, and freedom. In the end, ECU campus and the people won. The chapel remains intact and the cross still stands. Donna reflects, “As Christians, we worship the man who died upon the cross, not the cross. The cross is just a symbol of what Jesus did for us. It should be a welcoming symbol for all!”

“Be bold and willing to take the next step. Jesus took that next step, paying the ultimate price for you and I. He has called us to do the same. Are you willing?”



1st Timothy tells us to be an example of Christ in all things, giving heed to his words and doctrine. Waste none of the gifts or talents that God has bestowed. Meditate on all things above. Continue and carry on in Christ, to save thyself, and those around us. Donna concludes with this simple equation: “Jesus + Nothing = Everything. In the end, Christ wins and will forever remain.”

These days are filled with fear and uneasy feelings. Being human dictates worry about the future, paychecks, next meals, etc. Still, we have all that the world does not have. We have a risen Savior that promises never to leave us, worth repeating, “We know who wins, the ending is clear! We must take a stand, no matter how hard things may get!”

Should you be in attendance at a Donna Kilmurray concert, expect to gather around the Throne of Grace to worship, be it in song, scripture, prayer, or testimony, “I want everyone to feel welcome, leaving with energy, and a new excitement in the love of Christ.”

Donna has just released her latest single, *Let Jesus Do The Talking* distributed by Millennium Music Group. This song just might hold the key for another’s life story rewrite to begin.

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