

NEWS

'DOLLY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF DOLLYWOOD'

TALENT BIOS

DOLLY PARTON - "I've always been a writer. My songs are the door to every dream I've ever had and every success I've ever achieved," says Dolly Parton of her incredible career, which has spanned nearly five decades and is showing no signs of slowing down.

An internationally renowned superstar, the iconic and irrepressible Parton has contributed countless treasures to the world of music entertainment, penning classic songs such as "*Jolene*," "*Coat of Many Colors*," and her mega-hit "*I Will Always Love You*." With 1977's crossover hit "*Here You Come Again*," she successfully erased the line between country and pop music without noticeably altering either her music or her image. "I'm not leaving country," she said at the time, "I'm just taking it with me."

Making her film debut in the 1980 hit comedy "9 to 5," Parton earned rave reviews for her performance and an Oscar nomination for writing the title tune, along with her second and third Grammy Awards. Roles in "Steel Magnolias," "Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," "Rhinestone," and "Straight Talk" followed, along with two network television series, made for television movies, network and HBO specials, and guest-starring roles in series television. In 2006, Parton earned her second Oscar nomination for "*Travelin' Thru*," which she wrote for the film "Transamerica."

Dolly Parton's remarkable life began very humbly. Born January 19, 1946 on a farm in Sevier County, Tennessee, Parton is the fourth of twelve children. Her parents, Robert Lee and Avie Lee Parton struggled to make ends meet in the impoverished East Tennessee hills. This hard rural life was the foundation of Parton's career, as she began singing almost before she could talk, according to her father. By age 10, Parton was performing on local television and radio shows in nearby Knoxville, Tennessee. "I always wanted to be a star. It just seemed natural to me," she said. "Making music is all I've ever known."

Parton left for Nashville the day after her high school graduation. On her first afternoon there, she met a young man, Carl Dean, who would become her husband. Two years later, in May 1966, they were married. "He's good for me, cause he's so different in nature from me," she smiles.

In 1967, Parton's career took off when country music superstar Porter Wagoner began featuring her on his popular syndicated television show, exposing Parton to over 45 million people in more than 100 markets and attracting the attention of record executives at RCA. Parton and Porter had 14 Top Ten hits together, and Parton quickly blossomed into one of the best-selling

(more)



country artists in music history. By 1974, Parton ended her working relationship with Wagoner. She was voted the Country Music Association Female Artist of the Year two years in a row, and in 1978, Parton was named the CMA Entertainer of the Year.

In 1974, *"I Will Always Love You"* topped the charts and did so again in 1982 when it was revived in the movie *"Best Little Whorehouse in Texas,"* making Parton the first artist to earn a number one record twice with the same song. In 1992, the song was recorded by Whitney Houston for the movie *"The Bodyguard"* and went on to sell in excess of 4 million copies, topping the charts once again. *"I Will Always Love You"* was named BMI's Most Performed Song of the Year in 1993.

Parton saw a cherished dream become a reality in 1986 with the opening of her own theme park called Dollywood, in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, at the base of the Great Smoky Mountains. The state's number one tourist attraction, Dollywood was selected by the theme park industry as one of the top three theme parks in the world in 2006.

In 1988, she began the Dollywood Foundation to inspire children in her home community to dream more, learn more, do more and care more. Currently the foundation funds the Dolly Parton Imagination Library across America and in Canada, by giving every preschool child a book each month from the time he or she is born until the child reaches kindergarten. With the help of local sponsors, this program has expanded to over 800 communities in 41 states and will give away over 5 million books in 2007 alone. Parton says, "My dad was prouder of me for this program than for my music career. He thought it was grand that all the kids called me the Book Lady."

Also in 1988, Parton founded a group of dinner attractions called Dixie Stampede. In 2001, she built Dollywood's Splash Country, which is Tennessee's largest water park. Dolly Parton's entertainment businesses attract 4.5 million visitors annually and employ more than 3,000 people.

Long respected for her instinctive business savvy, Parton established Velvet Apple Music (BMI) early in her career and owns the copyrights and the publishing for her vast songwriting empire. She owns her own successful record label, Blue Eye Records.

Dolly Parton transitioned her flair for making hit music into producing hit movies and television shows when she established Sandollar Productions with former manager, Sandy Gallin. A film and television production company, Sandollar has produced feature films such as *"Father of the Bride"* I and II, *"Straight Talk,"* *"Sabrina,"* *"Shining Through,"* *"IQ,"* and the Academy Award-winning (for Best Documentary) *"Common Threads: Stories from the Quilt,"* along with Fox television shows *"Babes"* and *"Buffy the Vampire Slayer."*

(more)

Her 1994 autobiography was aptly titled "My Life and Other Unfinished Business."

Dolly Parton is the most honored female country performer of all time. Achieving 25 RIAA certified gold, platinum and multi-platinum awards, she has had 25 songs reach number 1 on the Billboard Country charts, a record for a female artist. She has 41 career top 10 country albums, a record for any artist, and she has 110 career charted singles over the past 40 years. All-inclusive sales of singles, albums, hits collections, paid digital downloads and compilation usage during her Hall of Fame career have reportedly topped a staggering 100 million records world-wide.

She has garnered seven Grammy Awards, 10 Country Music Association Awards, five Academy of Country Music Awards, three American Music Awards and is one of only five female artists to win the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year Award.

In 1999, Parton was inducted as a member of the Country Music Hall of Fame. She has her own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and became a member of the National Academy of Popular Music Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2001. Broadcast Music, Inc. honored Parton with their Icon Award in 2003, and in 2004, the U.S. Library of Congress presented her with their Living Legend Award for her contribution to the cultural heritage of the United States. This was followed in 2005 with the National Medal of Arts, the highest honor given by the U.S. government for excellence in the arts.

In December, 2006 Parton was honored by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for her lifetime of contributions to the arts. In June, 2007 Parton was named the recipient of the prestigious Johnny Mercer Award from the Songwriter's Hall of Fame. The Johnny Mercer Award is exclusively reserved for a songwriter who has already been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame in a prior year, and whose body of work is of such high quality and impact, that it upholds the gold standard set by the legendary Johnny Mercer.

Yet with all of the national and international recognition given her, Dolly Parton calls the bronze statue of her, which stands on the courthouse lawn in her hometown of Sevierville, Tennessee, her "greatest honor, because it came from the people who know me."

Always dreaming and always looking forward, Parton is busier than ever. Writing the music and lyrics for the Broadway musical version of *9 to 5*, working on various children's projects, and the release of her new album, *"Backwoods Barbie"*; these projects are just a few of her many interests at the moment. The phenomenon of Dolly Parton continues to flourish, as she remains one of the world's true superstars.

#

(more)



MILEY CYRUS - Miley Cyrus is a multiplatinum recording artist and is the youngest-ever recording artist with four #1 albums in less than three years. She recently released her fourth solo album "Can't Be Tamed."

Cyrus stars in the hit Disney Channel series "Hannah Montana," which is currently in its fourth season. She recently starred in the drama "The Last Song" scripted by Nicolas Sparks. She also starred in the feature film "Hannah Montana: The Movie," which topped the box office its opening weekend; was the voice of Penny in "Bolt;" and broke box office records with her 3D film "Hannah Montana and Miley Cyrus Best of Both Worlds Concert."

She is also the best-selling author of *Miles to Go*, her first book that shares her inspiring story, spanning from her Southern roots in Tennessee to the excitement of her record-setting triumphs in TV, music and film. In addition, Cyrus and designer Max Azria of apparel house BCBGMAXAZRIAGROUP, Inc. have teamed up to create Miley Cyrus & Max Azria, a new apparel line exclusive to Walmart.

Miley recently partnered with Youth Service America and founded Get Ur Good On (www.GETURGOODON.org), an online network of youth supporting each other in their mission to do "good" in their communities. She is also involved with numerous charities including City of Hope, Make-A-Wish Foundation and American Red Cross, among others.

#

BILLY RAY CYRUS – Multi-platinum recording artist Billy Ray Cyrus has sold more than 25 million albums worldwide, and earned nearly 30 chart singles, including 15 Top 40 hits, while at the same time establishing himself as a successful and respected actor in film and television. His debut album, *Some Gave All*, was a blockbuster success and is the longest running No. 1 country album ever, spending 34 weeks on *Billboard's* Top Country Albums chart. Cyrus' recent album -- 2007's *Home At Last* -- entered in the Top 20 on the *Billboard* 200, hitting No. 3 on the Top Country Album chart, while "Ready, Set, Don't Go" -- the moving duet with daughter Miley Cyrus -- became a Top 5 country smash. This year, Cyrus released his 11th album, *Back to Tennessee*, which combines his passion for blues, southern rock, bluegrass, gospel and country. The title track is also featured on "Hannah Montana: The Movie" soundtrack, which climbed to No. 1 on the country charts.

Cyrus currently stars as Robby Ray Stewart, the father of Miley's fictional character in the Disney Channel hit series "Hannah Montana." He continued his role in "Hannah Montana: The Movie." In addition to his role on "Hannah Montana," Cyrus hosted NBC's "Nashville Star" and recently starred in the Hallmark Channel Original Movie "Christmas in Canaan," based on a book that was co-authored by Kenny Rogers. Riding on its success, Hallmark Channel has green lit "Christmas in Canaan 2," to begin production in 2011. Other television and film credits include the acclaimed movie "Mulholland Drive," the title character in the PAX series "Doc," the Lifetime

(more)



film "Flying By," and the runaway ABC hit "Dancing with the Stars." Next, Cyrus can be seen in the action-comedy film "The Spy Next Door," alongside Jackie Chan.

#

KENNY ROGERS – By now, Kenny Rogers has become such an icon that it's easy to forget how he got there. The songs on *42 Ultimate Hits*, bringing together his top songs from the late 60s up to his current return to the charts, are a reminder that Rogers is a star who excels at his craft. For more than five decades, Rogers has delivered memorable songs, drawing fans among rock, pop, soul and country audiences.

Houston-born Rogers formed his first band while in high school in 1956 and never quit making music from that point on. The rockabilly group called The Scholars got a record deal and released two singles with local success, and performed a spot on American Bandstand. Soon afterward, Rogers joined the Bobby Doyle Trio, playing stand-up bass and appearing on their album. In 1966, he became a member of the New Christy Minstrels, the popular folk group which he left a year later to form The First Edition with other members of the troupe.

The spotlight started focusing on Rogers when the group got their first hit, "*I Just Dropped In (To See What Condition My Condition Was In)*." Within a year, the band was called Kenny Rogers and The First Edition, and his distinctive voice led the group to both pop and country chart success with "*Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town*," written by Mel Tillis. The double-genre success struck again with "*Reuben James*" and the group's own TV variety show.

In 1974, Kenny Rogers and the First Edition disbanded, leaving Rogers to pursue a solo career in country music. "*Love Lifted Me*," went Top 20 in 1975, but it was the "*Lucille*" that shot him into the stratosphere. Tops at country, it also succeeded on the pop chart, was named the CMA's Single of the Year and was certified Gold.

"*Daytime Friends*," "*Sweet Music Man*," and "*Love or Something Like It*" continued his run of success. Then came "*The Gambler*," a story song so vivid it not only delighted country and pop fans, it also became a TV movie, starring Rogers himself in the title role. The movie spawned four follow-ups, making it the longest running miniseries franchise on television. It started Rogers on a second career as an actor on television and movies, including another TV movie based on one of his hit songs, "*Coward of the County*."

Rogers dominated the pop charts, consistently finding songs with universal appeal. In the 1980s, he came to embody the role of the sensitive male, singing such romantic hits as "*Through The Years*," "*She Believes In Me*," "*You Decorated My Life*" and "*Lady*," the biggest song of his career. Those songs are classics today, sung at countless weddings, and even engraved on tombstones.

(more)

As the 1980s wound down, so did Rogers' chart success. Gone from the radio, Rogers kept busy in other ways, establishing himself as a well-respected photographer, publishing several books and being invited to the White House to shoot a portrait of First Lady Hillary Clinton. He authored several short stories and appeared off-Broadway in his Christmas musical, *The Toy Shoppe*.

In 1999, after forming his own record company, Dreamcatcher Entertainment, Rogers found himself back on the country chart with "*The Greatest*," a touching story song about a young boy playing baseball. When the follow-up, "*Buy Me a Rose*," hit No. 1, Rogers proved that his talent was just as vibrant and meaningful as it was when he first started out.

On *42 Ultimate Hits*, every great Kenny Rogers song from his career is included. The collection also has two new songs, "*We Are The Same*," an anthemic call to focus on what we in the world have in common rather than pointing out our differences, and "*My World Is Over*," a duet with new artist Whitney Duncan.

A 1987 Golden Globe nominee, Rogers' has been recognized with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

-- HALLMARK CHANNEL --