



Amelia Earhart Festival
July 17-18, 2009
Atchison, Kansas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAKEFEST 2009 TABS THREE STELLAR ACTS

Rodney Atkins to headline Atchison concert on July 17

ATCHISON, Kan. (Dec. 10, 2008) — Rodney Atkins, an artist known for his honest delivery and humble beginnings, will headline LakeFest 2009, a lakeside concert scheduled for Friday, July 17 in Atchison.

Also scheduled to perform are platinum country music vocal group Little Big Town and Texas-born singer-songwriter Jack Ingram. The concert is a highlight of the annual Amelia Earhart Festival, which will be held in the hometown of the world famous aviatrix on July 17-18.

Gift certificates are currently on sale for \$25 at the Atchison Area Chamber of Commerce, located at 200 S. 10th Street in Atchison. These gift certificates can be redeemed for LakeFest 2009 tickets when advance tickets go on sale from May 1 to July 16. Tickets on the day of the event are \$30.

The annual concert is held in the park surrounding Warnock Lake, three miles southwest of Atchison. The gate opens at 4 p.m., when food concession stands will be available. The National Anthem will be performed at 7 p.m. Jack Ingram will get things started, followed by Little Big Town and Rodney Atkins.

About the Artists

RODNEY ATKINS

If you're looking for an artist with the bona fide credentials to sing a country song, look no further. Rodney Atkins' latest album, "If You're Going Through Hell," captures every aspect of his life, from his humble multiple-adoption beginning to his rural east Tennessee upbringing to his present day, stick-to-your-roots convictions.

— more —

And judging by his breakout success in 2006, life is pretty good. “If You’re Going Through Hell,” recently certified gold, debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard country albums chart; the title track spent four weeks atop the Billboard country singles chart, earning Billboard Most Played Song of 2006 and SESAC Song of the Year honors. The follow-up single, “Watching You,” written by Atkins about his son, Elijah, spend two weeks at No. 1 on both the Billboard and Mediabase charts.

“Every song I sing is about the world as I know it,” Atkins says. “Every word is real. I’m not going to sing it if it isn’t.”

As an infant, Atkins was placed at the Holston Methodist Home for Children in Greenville, Tenn. Two different couples took him home, only to return him days later saying he was too sick for them to handle. But the third couple, the Atkins family, took him as their own, and though his condition initially worsened, they refused to give him up.

It wasn’t until high school that a guitar found its way into Atkins’ hands. He soon began playing country fairs, festivals and shopping malls. After graduation, Atkins Walter State Community College and later enrolled as a psychology major at Tennessee Tech. In his downtime, he started traveling to Nashville, playing more gigs and writing songs. He was soon signed by Mike Curb and Curb Records.

Atkins’ debut album, “Honesty,” was well received and critically acclaimed. It produced a Top 5 hit of the same name in 2003. But he tried something different in his sophomore effort.

First of all, he didn’t come to Nashville to record it. He put together a simple studio at his home, about 80 miles outside of Nashville, down a blacktop road that leads to a Dead End sign. Atkins wrote six of the 10 tracks and laid down his vocals in between the responsibilities of daily life and spending time with his family.

“This could be the most inexpensive record Curb has ever done,” he said, “because there was no studio clock ticking away. I’d just go in whenever I felt like singing, leave for a while to take my son down to fish at the river, and maybe finish after putting him to bed at night. It just felt right.”

LITTLE BIG TOWN

Little Big Town has hit the big-time with its unique four-part harmonies, in which all four members alternate as lead singers. Founded in 1998, the group is comprised of Karen Fairchild, Kimberly Roads Schlapman, Jimi Westbrook and Phillip Sweet.

After a short-lived deal with Mercury Nashville Records, Little Big Town released its self-titled debut album on Monument Records in 2002.

It produced a pair of Top 50 singles, but much more was in store.

After signing a deal with Equity Music Group, an independent label owned by Clint Black, the group released “The Road to Here.” Certified platinum, the album produced four Top 20 hits, including Top 10 smashes “Boondocks” and “Bring It On Home.”

Little Big Town released the album “A Place to Land” in 2007. The first single, “I’m with the Band,” was a Top 40 hit. The group also charted, along with Sugarland and Jake Owen, on a live cover of The Dream Academy’s “Life in a Northern Town.”

The group has been considered for some of country music’s top awards. They were among the short list of nominees for CMA Vocal Group of the Year in 2006, 2007 and 2008, were up for the Horizon Award in 2006 and 2007. They earn the Top New Vocal Duet/Group award in 2006 and were also nominated for Musical Event of the Year in 2008.

JACK INGRAM

Jack Ingram was born on Nov. 15, 1970, in Houston. He first played seriously while studying psychology at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. He toured around the bars and roadhouses of Texas with his Beat Up Ford band, and landed a regular Tuesday night gig at the honky-tonk club Adair’s. The second of Ingram’s two independently released albums was recorded live at the club. He earned a recording contract with University Record’s Rising Tide imprint and worked with Steve Earle on his debut for the label, 1997’s “Livin’ or Dyin’.”

Ingram relocated to Sony’s Lucky Dog imprint for 1999’s “Hey You” The 2000 follow-up was a Texas concert recorded with Charlie Robison and Bruce Robison. In 2002, “Electric” confirmed Earle’s influence on Ingram’s music, with his barroom country songs with a devil-may-car rock ‘n’ roll attitude. Lucky Dog issued several songs from the “Electric” sessions as the EP “Extra Volts” in 2003. “Live at Billy Bob’s Texas” arrived in November 2003.

In 2006, Ingram released “Live — Wherever You Are,” an album he recorded at Gruene Hall, on Big Machine Records. The project included his first two new studio tracks since the “Electric” sessions. The album’s first single, “Wherever You Are,” reached No. 1 at country radio. The second single was also a Top 10 single and both videos reached the top two spots on CMT. Both tracks are included on Ingram’s latest album, “This Is It,” his first studio album in five years.

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For more information about the Amelia Earhart Festival, please call Jacque Pregont at 913-367-2427 or 800-234-1854, or e-mail Jacque at afestival@atchisonkansas.net.