

STAGE RIGHT

Says:

“Come on In, Sit Right Down & Make Yourselves at Home”

By: Dave Englert, Carolyn & Steven Wong



JOHN CRABTREE ON LEAD GUITAR



CALEB ACKERMAN ON PIANO



J.G. ALFORD ON STEEL GUITAR

Patsy Cline loved to open her shows with her rendition of “Come On In.” It’s an upbeat unpretentious tune that instantly made her audiences feel welcome and that they were in the presence of just a good ol’ country gal that was excited to share her prodigious talent with them. Like Patsy, STAGE RIGHT hopes that its audiences always feel welcome at the Crighton Theatre and also that their performers feel the same way. Too often some performers in a show go unrecognized. We’d like for you to ‘come on in’ and get to know the talented band members and understudy for our production of *Always...Patsy Cline*. Who knows, their stories may inspire you to dust off that instrument and come on in and join the fun!

To get the inside story on the band for *Always...Patsy Cline* we interviewed each of the band members to discover what puts the rhythm in their soul. Music director Dave Englert has tapped into some incredible hometown talent by reprising the band from one of the most successful productions at the Crighton Theatre - *Buddy, the Buddy Holly Story* and adding a few new additions.

Guitarist Dr. John Crabtree, professor of music at SHSU specializing in History of Rock and Roll and Theory, was born in New Orleans, LA. He started playing guitar at age 13 and was influenced by the ‘80s Pop and Rock music. During high school he formed a band specializing in Heavy Metal and Progressive Rock. In college he started as a voice major because they didn’t have a guitar program. He then got his masters and doctorate in Composition from LSU. John performed as guitarist for several musicals, but performing with the Buddy Holly Band several years ago intensified his interest. John decided to get back to guitar playing, but felt he was too old for Rock. So he answered an ad for a country band, Lance Aldrich Band, and has been playing regionally with them bringing his sense of rock to country music. John grew up listening to traditional country with his dad



FELIX GAMEZ ON FIDDLE

and country rock with his mom.

Bassist Tim Prince, whose son, Drew, portrayed Buddy Holly at the Crighton, tells us that his first guitar teacher was a little old lady who had a turkey farm in Oklahoma, where he was born. He played drums and string bass in 6th grade, then moved to Virginia and played in the school orchestra. Subsequently he moved to Alabama and played tuba and electric bass. In the early 70s he was one of the first to bring an electric bass to the church service. In his twenties he played blue grass music back in Oklahoma on string bass, and is still performing occasionally with the same band of 30 years in Oklahoma and north Texas. He finally moved to Texas in 1988 and mentions New Grass Revival, Bill Monroe, Stanley Brothers, and the Carter Family as his influences.

Caleb Ackerman, playing keyboard, is another Conroe local who has been active in musicals since his piano teacher, Nadine Wilkinson, had him play in the pit for *The Music Man* at the Crighton Theatre. He performed in several musicals there and at Montgomery College and last year was chosen as music director for *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* at the Owen Theatre. Caleb plays gospel organ at Thomas Chapel United Methodist Church, and keyboards at Tree of Life Christian Church in Magnolia. He also debuted at the Re-

naissance Festival this fall as the King’s Feast keyboardist, actor, singer, and dancer. He also plays piano bar in restaurants and has a large private piano studio.

SHSU Math professor J.G. Alford will be playing steel guitar. He previously played steel guitar for the Owen Theatre production of *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. In sixth grade his uncle mailed him a guitar and he cultivated a taste for rock and blues. In high school he formed a group influenced by blues, southern rock, and the Allman Brothers. He was raised in South Carolina, California, and has lived for the last 20 years in Texas. His influences are Randy Travis, traditional country music, Kenny Rogers, and White Man Blues. At age 15 he bought a Dobro and played in restaurants and in 1989 he bought his pedal steel guitar. He was involved in physics and engineering at UCLA and came to Alvin High School as a math teacher. J.G. has been at SHSU for the last 5 years. He has played country music in dance halls, honky tonks, and festivals throughout Texas. His idols include Buddy Emmons and the legends of 50s’-60s country and western swing.

Daniel Dufour has been playing percussion for 11 years and has played in many groups in the Conroe and Woodlands areas. After graduating from Willis High School, he is currently finishing his bachelor’s in Music Performance at Sam Houston State University. While in school he has held many positions such as Principle of the SHSU Wind Ensemble, SHSU Symphony Orchestra, drummer for the SHSU Jazz Ensemble, performer in the SHSU Student Jazz Combo, Percussion Group, Bearkat Marching Band, and the Steel Band. This talented young man stepped in to play drums for our Patsy understudy auditions with only two hours notice after our initial drummer, Zach Kirk, was injured in a motorcycle accident. Daniel never missed a beat! We wish Zach a full and speedy recovery and welcome Daniel to the Crighton.

The youngest member of the Patsy Cline Band



MEREDITH ZARITSKI AUDITIONING FOR PATSY CLINE



DANIEL DUFOUR ON DRUMS



TIM PRINCE ON BASS GUITAR

is Conroe High School senior violinist, Felix Gamez. He debuted as the cafe violinist at the Owen Theatre in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. Felix started violin lessons in 5th grade and is now the Concertmaster of the Conroe High School Orchestra and a member of the Houston Youth Symphony. The Conroe High Marching Band created a featured part for the halftime show on the electric violin for Felix. He earned 2nd chair in Region Orchestra and plans to attend Rice University in the Fall. Country music is relatively new to Felix, but he is very excited about the show.

In addition to the band members, another commonly unsung hero in theatrical productions is the understudy. The role of understudy is the most demanding and thankless in the world of musical theatre; you must learn all of the lines, songs, and blocking usually with very little rehearsal time and then be able to go on at a moments notice and not miss a beat. After all of that preparation, an understudy may never get to perform the role. With this production of *Always...Patsy Cline* we were faced with a dilemma. Our star, Mary Allen-Keating who portrays Patsy, found out that the wedding date of her best friend had been moved right smack in the middle of the run of this show (Feb. 26th).

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With the desire to let Mary be with her friend on her special day yet maintaining the old show-biz adage of 'the show must go on' we held auditions for a Patsy understudy. Our understudy was guaranteed only one performance date, yet four young ladies bravely stepped up to the challenge of auditioning for a part they would have to spend an enormous amount of time preparing for (Patsy sings 27 songs in the show!) for only one performance. It was a hard decision because all of the ladies that auditioned were so talented, but one was chosen to be Patsy Cline for a day; Meredith Zaritski.

STAGE RIGHT audiences will remember Meredith from our highly successful production of Annie. She portrayed the dimwitted Lily St. Regis to enthusiastic audience approval and critical acclaim. Meredith's love of performance began with her grandfather whom she calls "Judgie". He is the one who nurtured her love of music and the stage. When she was four he took Meredith to see a local production of *Annie Get Your Gun*. She can still remember sitting in the seats and watching with such a desire to be a performer. She knew from that day it was what she wanted to do. Meredith was in her high school's choral program where she eventually was selected to perform with the Jazz Choir, and an elite group of singers known as Encore who compete around the state and southwest region of the country.

Currently, Meredith is about to graduate from Sam Houston State University with a degree in Theatre Arts. Locally, in addition to being seen in *Annie* and *Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge* (where she played four different roles with four different accents and four different wigs!) for STAGE RIGHT at the Crighton Theatre, she was also in *Annie Get Your Gun*, and *Noises Off* at the Owen Theatre. Meredith credits the experience of being in *Annie Get Your Gun* as what convinced her to switch her major to theatre; for that was the show that "Judgie" took her to as a little girl and created the initial spark of interest in theatre.

Meredith admits that portraying Patsy Cline is the most challenging role she has undertaken, yet also the most rewarding. Her admiration for the way Patsy was able to pour all of her emotions into the lyrics of her songs has been an inspiration to the little girl who sat with her grandfather and dreamed to be up on the stage. We think "Judgie" would be proud of the Patsy Cline Meredith has created. We hope you will come on Saturday, Feb. 26th and see for yourself.

Now you've met the band that's 'got a lot of rhythm in their soul' and the understudy whose willing to jump on that 'honky tonk merry-go-round' for one night we hope you will come to *Always...Patsy Cline* and enjoy the show even more knowing the stories about the unsung heroes of this production. Everyone has a story - especially Patsy Cline. Patsy lived a tumultuous life. In recognition of Patsy's story we are requesting patrons to bring gift and phone cards (\$5-\$25 value) to benefit the clients of the Montgomery County Women's Center. Representatives from the Women's Center will be on hand at each performance to answer questions and accept card donations. So bring your gift card, come on in, sit right down and enjoy *Always...Patsy Cline!* ♦

The 50-50 Rule: Program Designed to Help Siblings Share the Care of Senior Parents

A long-time employee of an accounting firm, Alice has been waiting for this promotion for years. But then her mom falls and breaks a hip. As the youngest in the family, and the one her mom likes best, Alice suddenly is thrust into the role of family caregiver and is struggling to keep up with the demands of her new job because her siblings can't help.

Situations like this are among the family conflicts that some caregivers encounter and senior care professionals witness when it comes to the care of seniors. Caregiver stress, life-and-death medical crises, financial problems and property disputes often become part of the ongoing saga of a family's caregiving story. Relationships between adult siblings can suffer as a result.

That's why the Home Instead Senior Care® network has launched the 50-50 RuleSM, a program

that offers strategies for overcoming sibling challenges and differences to help families provide the best care for elderly parents.

"Any family that has cared for a senior loved one knows that problems working with siblings can lead to family strife," said Polo and Sharon LaCoste, Owner of Home Instead Senior Care for Montgomery County. "Making decisions together, dividing the workload and teamwork are the keys to overcoming family conflict."

The 50-50 Rule refers to the average age (50) when siblings are caring for their parents as well as the need for brothers and sisters to share in the plans for care 50-50 as much as possible. Research conducted for the Home Instead Senior Care network reveals that an inability to work together often leads to one sibling becoming responsible for the bulk of

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