

A Wing and Adair

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As a Family Band Graduate, Solo Act & Sister Sadie Member, Tina Adair is Flying High

by Stephen Pitalo

Tina Adair's music career began with her family's band, the Adairs.

"The band is pretty much the same, always, and you are always around each other to rehearse and work up material," Adair said of the benefits and drawbacks of a band of relations. "There's the bond of family. Then, add music to that and it seems to increase that bond. Family harmonies are some of the best...you just naturally sound good together – blending. Some drawbacks would be that you don't always agree, and because you are together a lot makes family disagreements the worst at times. I loved making music with my family and if it weren't for them pushing and supporting me, I would not have had such a long career in music."

Just after the Adairs won the 1996 Pizza Hut Bluegrass Showdown, 17-year-old Tina found herself with a recording contract from Sugar Hill Records. Her 1997 album *Just You Wait and See* was produced by Jerry Douglas and features such luminaries as Chris Thile, Bryan Sutton, Aubrey Haynie, Viktor Krauss, Charlie Cushman, Keith Little, and Alan O'Bryant. "It was just time," said Adair of going solo. "When I signed with Sugar Hill records back in '96, they had discussed doing the solo thing. We knew that at some point in time that's probably what would happen."

Then, she decided to go to college. "I'm blessed to have two

parents that worked extremely hard to be able to offer to pay for my brother and me to attend our choice of college. I chose Belmont University. Every summer my parents would take my brother and me to Nashville and I would always want to drive up/down music row. At the end of Music Row sits Belmont. I would see those beautiful white buildings with the large columns and tell my folks, 'I'm going to go there someday!' Luckily, Belmont has one of the top Music Business programs in the world. And so, from a young kid on, I had my sights on Belmont."



She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in Music Business and then went to work in Nashville for the Mike Curb College of Entertainment & Music Business at Belmont. She has served as the Director of the Advising Center in the Curb College for the last 18 years.

According to Adair, the real difference between her earlier *All I Need* solo album – recorded during her college years – and the more recently released *Born Bad* is just the amount of life she's lived since then. Then, in December of 2012, Tina earned a spot in a new family of sorts.

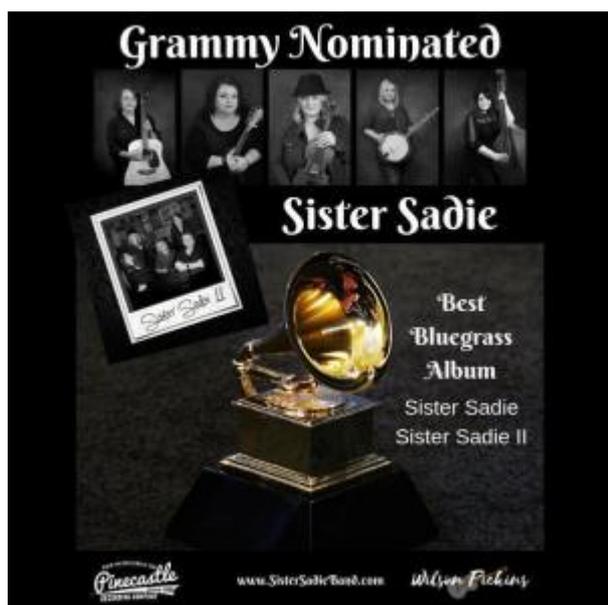
Late that year, Adair joined forces with four other prominent ladies in bluegrass music to form the all-star group Sister Sadie, featuring Adair on vocals and mandolin along with Dale Ann Bradley (vocals, guitar), Gena Britt (vocals, banjo), Beth Lawrence (vocals, bass) and Deanie Richardson (fiddle). Their first release on Pinecastle Records reached #1 for four months on the Roots Music Charts and #4 on the Billboard Bluegrass charts. Their sophomore project title, *Sister Sadie II* hit #2 on the Billboard Bluegrass charts & was nominated for a GRAMMY Award in the top five for Best Bluegrass Album category. Making their Grand Ole Opry debut in 2019, Sister Sadie also took home the prestigious IBMA Vocal Group of the Year Award at the 2019 International Bluegrass Music Association Awards making history as the first all-female band to win the award. At the 2020 International Bluegrass Music Awards, Sister Sadie made history once again as they won the coveted Entertainer of the Year being the first all-female group to ever win this award as well as taking home their second Vocal Group of the Year award.

She and the ladies of Sister Sadie just seemed to fall into their collaboration, she said that the dynamic is different from a band with family members.

“We’ve all known each other prior to the first show,” Adair said, “but the girls thought it’d be fun to get together and

pick some and decided to do it at the Station Inn. It was around Christmas time. And from the first notes we played together that day around four o'clock in the afternoon, it just felt magical." They knew it was something special from those first few notes.

"Bands are not always easy, whether it's a family band or nonfamily band, because more than one person has control and has a say. We use a voting process in Sister Sadie which helps a lot. You have to consider everyone in the mix. It's not just about you. You cannot be selfish or have a selfish attitude and be a part of a band. I think it's great to always keep that in the back of your mind. Everyone needs and deserves a say and a right to share their opinions without feeling like they can't. That's the way we (SS) operate."

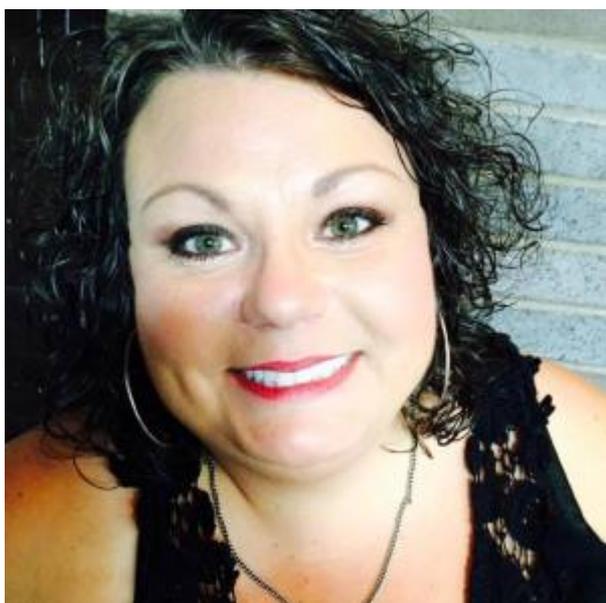


<https://youtu.be/vPL6Dl1tZsc>

The family band was slightly different in that they always looked to their dad to make most of the decisions but then as Tina got older, a lot of the musical decisions were turned over to her. But value was still placed on everyone's input, Tina explained. "As hard as being in a band can sometimes be, at the end of the day, you have to love who you're making music with. We loved and respected each other in my family band, and we love and respect each other in Sister Sadie."

In October, Adair released a remake of Kathy Mattea's 1988 hit, "Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses" in a more bluegrass style.

"'Eighteen Wheels and a Dozen Roses" is a song that I've loved to sing ever since I was a little girl," Adair said. "This song to me is about the forever love story, it's about hope and having something bright to look forward to!"





	R	13	IRENE KELLEY Hills of Home (Mountain Fever) Irene Kelley, Ronnie Bowman	185		185
R	12	14	AMANDA COOK West Virginia Coal (Mountain Fever) Carolyn VanLieropp-Boone, Troy Boone	184	166	350
	R	15	SARAH CHAPMAN A Little Past Little Rock (Sarah Chapman) Brett Jones, Tony Lane and Jess Brown	163		163
	D	16	TINA ADAIR Eighteen Wheels & A Dozen Roses (Engelhardt Music Group) Paul Nelson, Gene Nelson	158		158
R	11	17	AUDIE BLAYLOCK & REDLINE Love Is An Awful Thing (615 Hideaway Records) R. Jones	155	172	327
16	R	18	THE GRASCALS Sleepy Little Town (Mountain Home) Jerry Salley, J. B. Rudd	149	163	312
	R	19	RICK FARIS If The Kansas River Can (Dark Shadow) Rick Faris	145		145
	D	20	BACKLINE The Farm (Mountain Fever) Kaitlyn M Mabry	144		144

The Bluegrass Today Chart

This chart is compiled weekly from actual airplay data logged and reported by our contributing Bluegrass