

Rich on Song

by Susan Marquez

It's hard to believe Dave Adkins grew up in a poor family in Pikeville, Kentucky. Today he's rich with great friends, family, a menagerie of animals, and a successful music career. Not that Dave ever wanted for much.

"I had a great childhood. My parents did all they could for me, including buying me a \$100 Yamaha guitar when I was eight years old."

[one-half-first]

Dave says his mama tells the story of Dave singing from the time he could talk. "I wouldn't ask for something like a regular kid, I'd sing for it!" By the time he was in the sixth grade, he joined up with three of his friends to form a band that performed at schools and other venues in the area. "When we were juniors and seniors we were playing a hundred or more gigs a year!" Their big break came when they performed in a talent show at Dollywood when they were juniors in high school. "We won, and a higher-up from Dollywood was at the show and told us we should come audition." They did, and while not immediately picked up, they got a letter a while later that said there was a place for them at the theme park if they wanted to play there. "We spent two years at Dollywood, and during that time we learned a lot about the music business. They polished us up and got us ready to go out into the world."[/one-half-first]

[one-half]After leaving Dollywood, Dave did some solo country shows and even performed with a rock band in the Chicago area before leaving music altogether. "I was done at the time, and ready to move on with my life." In September 2008, Dave's life

changed when he got married to a woman who supported his dream. She had two daughters, now 21 and 25. "Both are wonderful girls." He now has a three-year-old step-granddaughter whom he loves dearly. In 2010, with the encouragement from his wife, Dave returned to the music world, and to his bluegrass roots. He formed the group Dave Adkins & Republik Steele. In just three years, he won a Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America (SPBGMA) nomination as Male Vocalist of the Year in the Contemporary category. Many other nominations and awards have followed.[/one-half]

"The only one I really see when not on tour is Mitchell. Our wives are really close friends."

In addition to touring and recording, Dave loves performing on the Ernie Evans bluegrass cruise. We went to the Bahamas last year, and we're going again in January, but in 2019 we are going to Cozumel, and I'm really looking forward to that!" He also takes part in a big bluegrass weekend each November in Breaks Interstate Park. "We did our first show November 3 and it sold out. We thought if 100 people came, it would be a win, but we sold 300 tickets." The Dave Adkins Band shares the stage with acts like Ralph Stanley Jr. and Blue Highway. "We'll be doing it again on November 10, 2018!"



After that show, things start winding down for the year and Dave's thoughts turn to the holidays at his home on the side of a mountain in Elkhorn City, Kentucky. "The kids come home,

and on Christmas Eve we go to my mama's house, then to my wife's mama's house, then we wake up at home, where I love to play Santa Claus. I feel so blessed because when I was growing up, a good meal at Christmas was a big deal. We didn't have many presents. But that didn't matter—I felt like the luckiest kid alive.”

Dave Adkins Music

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