

Texas Country Superstar Pat Green Visits Texoma

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Pat Green's latest single, *Wayback Texas*, takes Texomans back to a time when everyone was younger and life was much more simple and carefree.

Green brings his hot brand of country music and bucket full of hits to Heritage Hall Friday, Feb. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. The opening act, Jeff Hobbs and the Jacks hit the stage at approximately 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the Heritage Hall Box Office at 580-226-1212 or at Sears in Ardmore, Wine, Etc., Oasis Staffing or Two Frogs Grill.

Green has been on an extraordinary run of hits and major tours in the past five years, touring with the likes of Kenny Chesney and Brooks and Dunn. Since he released his big hit single, "Wave on Wave," he has been on a hitmaking roll, which has culminated in his recent CD release, "Cannonball," which has yielded the big hits, "Wayback Texas," "Dixie Lullabye" and "Feels Just Like It Should."

Green said he is feeling very lucky right now.

"I am a blessed man," he said. "I have really enjoyed this time of my life and being creative. What it is is what makes it so special."

Cannonball has been a big success for Green.

"I haven't quite closed the book on that CD yet, but I think my record company has," he said. "We are back in the studio getting ready to record a new CD."

Green has been a big part of the recent writing and release of a new book, "Dancehalls and Dreamers." The book, written by Texas journalist Luke Gilliam, is a big step and an important written history for Green to have published. Autographed copies of the book are available by logging onto the book's website, www.dancehallsanddreamers.com.

"George Strait, the 'King of All Country,' would not be George Strait without playing the Texas dance halls like Gruen Hall. The first time I went to Luckenback was for Willie Nelson's Picnic in 1992," he explained. "The Texas dancehall circuit is a very important aspect of country music and I am very proud of the book. I myself started in Gruen Hall and Luckenback. They are just wonderful places and playing there just solidified what I was going to do with the rest of my life. Cross Canadian Ragweed, Randy Rogers and Stoney Larue are all experiencing now what I did and they are the real up and comers in the business."

Green, despite his busy schedule, has been very active with social causes. He was recently honored by the American Red Cross with their highest civilian honor, The Crystal Cross Award for Service. Green is also a blood donor and has recorded several public service announcements on the importance of blood donation. He is also a strong supporter of St. Jude Children's Medical Research Center in Memphis, Tenn. and has visited the hospital to meet the young children at the cancer research center. He has also been featured on the "Country Cares" St. Jude radiothons to raise money for the not-for-profit medical center.

"Wayback Texas" and "Population You and Me" are two songs that appeal to a wide variety of country fans.

"I think that is part of the job," Green said. "You don't make it very far in our business if you don't know how to tell the truth in a way that connects. 'Wayback Texas' is the first song I ever put out that I didn't love. But I felt like it really got at it. Everybody remembers their first love and how the world goes away when you are in love and the world be damned. And I love that sensation I got when I heard that song.

"I feel like country music and rock 'n' roll, music is about nothing today. Every song is like a Seinfeld episode. There is no story. What's the story? I am big on writing songs that have culture in them and have bits of Americana in them and are relevant to this time. That is the key for me and how come I have been moderately successful."

One song on Cannonball, "Dixie Lullabye," really has touched the hearts of country fans everywhere.

"That is a fantastic song. I felt it was a powerful thing, but it is not a lay down and die song. It leaves you thinking, you don't just turn it off and walk away from it," he explained. "I don't put out a lot of slow songs. When I heard the song, my thoughts went to 'He Stopped Loving Her Today' (a country classic from George Jones) and some of the bigger ballads that came out of Nashville. The biggest ones always talk about the tenderness of mortality. The reality of the process of living and dying is worth talking about."

Vocally, the song is different from anything Green has attempted in his career and was difficult for him to master.

"I had to train and it took a long time to get the vocal right. Your voice is like anything else. It is a learned thing. It isn't tough to sing live now, it was at first," he noted. "I didn't have the ability to hit some of the notes and to extend my voice that far. It took a while, but once I got there, I am very comfortable there."

Green's show in Ardmore will be a greatest hits and fan favorites show, along with some of his favorites performed live.

"You have to play the stuff that is on the radio and play the stuff the fans like that never made it radio and then I have to play a few to make me happy," he explained. "That is what I do onstage."

Green said he has 34 songs for the next CD. Green said he has one song he has been holding for many years that probably won't make this CD either.

"So we are going to have to whittle it down some," he laughed. "I have a song called, 'Little Miss Miscontent,' which is a word I made up. I have been trying to put it on every record I can remember. 'Cannonball' was another one of those. It started during the 'Wave on Wave' record. It just didn't materialize and materialize. Usually when I go to a new record, I have a set of songs, then take a peek at everything that didn't make the last record and see if I can fix any of them and make them work.

Cannonball just happens to be one I picked up, worked on and it turned out great. 'Little Miss Miscontent,' I looked at again this time and nobody got excited when I mentioned it. So I just kept moving."