



TOP

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CAPE GIRARDEAU - The Oak Ridge Boys, who have one of the most distinctive and recognizable sounds in the music industry, will bring their show to the Donald C. Bedell Performance stage Oct. 12 at Southeast Missouri State University's River Campus.

The concert is scheduled for 8 p.m. Tickets go on sale to the general public Aug. 25 by calling the River Campus Box Office at (573) 651-2265 or online at **RiverCampusEvents.com**. The box office is located in the Cultural Arts Center, 518 S. Fountain St. Hours are weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Oak Ridge Boys string of hits includes the pop chart-topper "Elvira," which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, as well as "Bobbie Sue," "Dream On," "Thank God For Kids," "American Made," "I Guess It Never Hurts To Hurt Sometimes," "Fancy Free," "Gonna Take A Lot Of River" and many others. They have had 12 gold, three platinum and one double platinum album, plus one double platinum single, and had more than a dozen national Number One singles and over 30 Top Ten hits.

"When I first got the call about The Oak Ridge Boys, I thought it might be too big an act for the 950-seat Bedell Performance Hall," said Bob Cerchio at the River Campus. "But the agent said no, the guys were looking for more intimate settings. Well, that's the definition of the Bedell. As anyone who saw Rick Springfield this past July knows, this is going to be a really up-close-and-personal experience. They'll see it all and hear every

glorious note.”

Speaking of notes, the four-part harmonies and upbeat songs of The Oak Ridge Boys have garnered a host of industry and fan accolades including Grammy, Dove, ACM, and CMA awards. In 2008, they were awarded the coveted Academy of Country Music Pioneer Award. Every time they step before an audience, the Oaks bring three decades of charted singles, and 50 years of tradition, to bear on a stage show widely acknowledged as among the most exciting anywhere.

Members of The Oak Ridge Boys include lead singer Duane Allen, bass singer extraordinaire Richard Sterban, tenor Joe Bonsall and baritone William Lee Golden.

“When I go on stage, I get the same feeling I had the first time I sang with The Oak Ridge Boys,” Allen says. “This is the only job I’ve ever wanted to have.”

“Like everyone else in the group,” adds bass singer extraordinaire, Sterban. “I was a fan of the Oaks before I became a member. I’m still a fan of the group today. Being in The Oak Ridge Boys is the fulfillment of a lifelong dream.”

Their career has spanned not only decades, but also formats. In 1977, Paul Simon tapped the Oaks to sing backup for his hit “Slip Slidin’ Away,” and they went on to record with George Jones, Brenda Lee, Johnny Cash, Roy Rogers, Billy Ray Cyrus, Bill Monroe, Ray Charles and even Shooter Jennings, the son of their old friend Waylon Jennings and Jessi Colter.

They produced one of the first Country music videos. In 1977, “Easy,” although not released in the U.S., reached the Number Three slot in Australia. They participated in the first American popular music headline tour in the USSR.

The Oak Ridge Boys have appeared before five presidents. And they have become one of the most enduringly successful touring groups anywhere, still performing some 150 dates each year at major theaters, fairs, and festivals across the United States and Canada.

They did it with a consistently upbeat musical approach and terrific business savvy.

“We always look for songs that have lasting value and that are uplifting,” says Allen, who co-produced seven of the Oaks’ last eight studio albums.

They also have proved themselves to be capable and tireless advocates of charitable and

civic causes, serving as spokesmen or board members of fundraisers for the Boy Scouts of America, the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse (now, Prevent Child Abuse America), Feed The Children, the National Anthem Project and many more.

The Oaks' high-energy stage show remains the heart and soul of what they do, and they refine it several times a year, striving to keep it fresh well into the future.

"We're not willing to rest on our laurels," Golden says. "That gets boring. As a group, we do things constantly to challenge ourselves, to try to do something different or better than the last time we did it."

"I feel like I can do what I do on stage just as good now as I could 20 years ago," says Bonsall. "I plan to be rockin' my tail off out there as long as I'm healthy. The people who come out, who bring their families to see us, deserve everything I've got."

In 2011, Cracker Barrel Old Country Store asked The Oak Ridge Boys to record an album with a blend of previously recorded and brand new songs. The result was "It's Only Natural," a 12-track CD with seven rerecorded hits, including the group's multi-platinum, Country-Pop hit "Elvira," and five new songs.

Veteran Oaks' producer Ron Chancey returned to the studio with the group to produce "Elvira" and two new songs, and the team of Duane Allen and Michael Sykes reunited to produce the remaining nine. The album debuted on September 19, 2011, a month after the Oaks were inducted into the Grand Ole Opry. The Oaks' history has been intertwined with the Opry for more than 60 years, dating back to the founders of the Oak Ridge Quartet in the 1940s. The current lineup of Allen, Bonsall, Sterban and Golden has performed on the Opry stage many times during the past four decades.

In November 2011, The Oak Ridge Boys and Cracker Barrel released the Oaks' new single, "What'cha Gonna Do?" to Country radio. Internet sensation Keenan Cahill joined the group for the taping of their viral music video for the song.

The Oak Ridge Boys performed at the 2012 "We're All for the Hall" fundraiser hosted by Keith Urban and Vince Gill. The April 10 concert event, held at Nashville's Bridgestone Arena, also featured Lady Antebellum, Rascal Flatts, the Band Perry, and Alabama, among others, and raised \$450,000 for the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

Gaither Music released The Oak Ridge Boys' "Back Home Again," a retro-flavored Gospel album in May. A Christmas album, co-produced with Allen, will release this fall.

“We’ve experienced a lot of longevity,” adds Sterban. “I think the reason is the love we have for what we do—the desire, the longing to actually get up there and do it. We love to sing together ... to harmonize together. It’s what our lives are all about.”

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