



26 COUNTRYWEEKLY.COM

FATE

Though raised in Utah and Texas, the JaneDear girls were born to be together. *story by KIP KIRBY*

Sometimes fate has a funny way of interrupting life. Just ask Danelle Leverett and Susie Brown of the JaneDear girls. When they met five years ago at a club where Susie was playing fiddle, neither could've guessed the chance meeting would change their lives. They just knew something magical had clicked.

Says Danelle, "We exchanged phone numbers that night, and a couple of weeks later, we went swimming. Halfway through swimming that day, we realized we both had our instruments in the backs of our cars, so we started working on a song. We came up with this chord progression and, the next thing we knew, we had a melody and we were singing in perfect unison and harmony. It was crazy."

That collaboration led to two more songs that weekend and three the next. Almost before they realized it, they'd become a duo. According to Danelle, "When I met Susie, I knew it was going to be something special. There was an undeniable connection and chemistry."

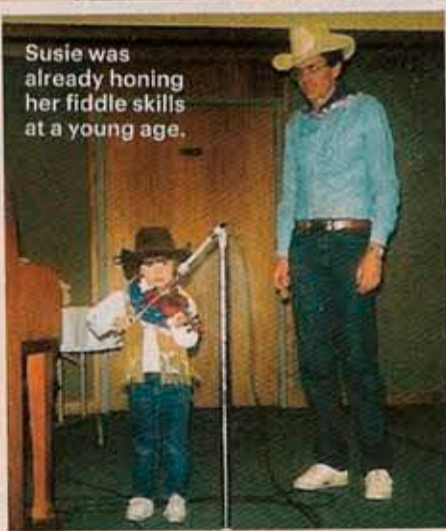
Close in age and interests, the JaneDear girls share a remarkable number of other similarities as well. Both come from close-knit and highly supportive families. Both took a keen interest in gymnastics and sports growing up. Both moved to Nashville immediately after college to establish themselves as songwriters and musicians. Both are multitalented instrumentalists; between them, they play a total of eight instruments.

But there are differences as well. Susie grew up in Alpine, Utah, the youngest of seven children. Her mother

Danelle (right) had a sweet cowgirl style as a youngster.



Susie was already honing her fiddle skills at a young age.



was a midwife, and Susie was born at home. With a 23-year age span among the siblings, her parents strove to create unity through music. "My mom always had a dream of having a family band," recalls Susie. "I can remember when I was really little, she had this old piano, like 100 years old, that my aunt had given her. My mom would play the piano, my brother Robert would play the banjo, my brother John would play the fiddle, I would play the fiddle and try to keep up with John and, later, my dad started playing bass."

As a child, Susie was happiest outdoors. "When my parents couldn't find me, I'd be out in our family garden eat-

Danelle Leverett (left) and Susie Brown mix pop sounds, energetic instrumentals and a rocker-glam image. "I knew it was going to be something special," says Danelle. "There was an undeniable connection and chemistry."