

CRAIG MORGAN

by Tamela Meredith Partridge
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Country music star and military veteran, Craig Morgan, is right at home whether he's entertaining country music fans or military troops overseas.

"There will always be some patriotic song on every album I do until I quit," says Morgan, who served in the US Army 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions before launching his music career. "I think we owe it to the people who serve. Anytime I can do something to bring light to the people in the military, I will. I get e-mail everyday on my website from soldiers saying my patriotic singles, 'Paradise' or 'God, Family And Country' gets them through the day. I'm no longer a soldier, but they see me as a representative for them. It's so cool to hear them say, 'We're proud of you.'"



Morgan, a 2008 Grand Ole Opry inductee, is scheduled to perform at the Sandwich Fair on Friday, September 9th -- just two days before the tenth anniversary of the 9-11 terrorist tragedy.

"September 11th will always be something that all of us will remember and show reverence to because of the lives that were lost to the terrorists," says Morgan. "But as an entertainer, it gives me pleasure to know that I may be able to do something to assist someone to make them feel a little bit better about what we are doing right now or what is happening. Especially having been in the military myself."

Morgan, a Dickson, Tn. native, was a U.S. Army paratrooper by age 20 and earned sixteen medals for Meritorious Service, Commendation, and Achievement during his ten years on active duty and an additional nine years in the Army Reserves.

Morgan, who just returned from his 9th trip overseas to entertain U.S. troops, received the 2006 USO Merit Award for his dedication to assisting others through his charitable works. Past recipients of the USO Merit Award include Steven Spielberg, Elizabeth Taylor, and Bob Hope.

Morgan also serves as spokesperson for the organization *Folds of Honor*, which provides post-secondary educational scholarships for children and spouses of U.S. military service members killed or disabled during service.

I'm just like a lot of the soldiers I go play for there," Morgan says, "because this isn't new to me. I can talk the talk with them -- I can communicate."

Morgan also communicates with country music fans through his new single, "This Ole Boy" which was recently released by Black River Entertainment. Written by Ben Hayslip, Dallas Davidson, and Rhett Atkins, "This Ole Boy," the title track and lead single from Craig's new album, expected early 2012, is the perfect sing-along country love song.

Morgan is best known for the massive radio airplay of his hits, including "Almost Home," "That's What I Love About Sunday," "Redneck Yacht Club," "Little Bit of Life," "International Harvester," and "Bonfire."

"Much like everyone else, I think music has a huge impact on an individual," Morgan says. "It can take you somewhere you can't go, it can take you somewhere that you've been, and it can remind you of important things. One of my goals is help people envision all those little things that mean so much."

Morgan, an avid outdoorsman, is also the star of the #1 rated Saturday morning hunting show, "Craig Morgan All Access Outdoors," which airs on The Outdoor Channel. In its second season, the show is a unique, behind-the-scenes look at Morgan's extreme lifestyle at home, touring and in the great outdoors. The hit series is airing through the end of the year.

Morgan recently hosted the 5th annual Craig Morgan Charity Ride and Concert in his hometown of Dickson, Tn on August 6-7, 2011, which raised more than \$95,000. Monies raised from the celebrity dirt bike ride and star-studded concert event support Billy's Place, a temporary home for displaced children awaiting permanent foster care, or until they can be reunited with their biological families. His long term goal is to start additional Billy's Place homes around the country.

For Morgan, maintaining a hectic country music schedule is simply a matter of discipline.

"Like most people, I have a lot going on every day," Morgan says. "And I'm the type of person that thrives under pressure. So, I guess you can say that my structured military background was perfect training for the music industry."

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According to country singer, songwriter, and military veteran, Craig Morgan, love is something you never forget.

"I co-wrote my current single, Love Remembers, with my longtime co-producer and collaborator, Phil O'Donnell, while we were out on the road touring last year," says Morgan of the steadily climbing Billboard Top Twenty country hit.

Morgan will perform at the Center For The Performing Arts in Bloomington on Saturday.

"I aim to provide the audience at The Center For The Performing Arts with music that's real, true, sincere, and passionate," Morgan says. "I hope the people come to our show and leave with a sense of enjoyment, fulfillment and feel as if they got their time and money's worth."

Morgan, who decided to exercise his right of term according to his contract, left the independent recording label Broken Bow Records earlier this year.

"It's been a good six years with BBR, but now it's time to move forward," says Morgan, who released three CDs on Broken Bow Records and is best known for such chart-topping hits as "Almost Home," "That's What I Love About Sunday" (country radio's most-played song of 2005), "Redneck Yacht Club," "I Got You," "Little Bit Of Life," "Tough" and "International Harvester."

"This is a pivotal time for the music industry, and I'm really looking forward to exciting and innovative new opportunities to bring my music to the fans," says Morgan, who signed in March, 2008 with BNA Records, a division of Sony BMG Nashville.



Of the signing, Sony BMG Chairman Joe Galante hailed, "It's a rare privilege to welcome a new addition to the roster whose hard work and commitment to the music has enabled him, so early in his career, to build such a strong base with the industry and the fans."

Morgan wrote or co-wrote six out of ten songs for his upcoming BNA Records Label studio album, "That's Why," scheduled for an Oct. 21st release.

"I titled the album after a song that's on the project," Morgan says. "I felt that the title, That's Why, truly encompassed everything on the record -- that's why I do what I do. That's why I love the way I love. That's why I feel the way I feel. That's why."

Morgan, a father of five children, has performed on the legendary stage of the Grand Ole Opry more than 170 times, and plays over 200 sold-out concerts a year. He spent ten years on active duty in the U.S. Army before launching his music career, and makes a point to perform as often as possible at U.S. military installations both in the U.S. and abroad. He was awarded the USO Merit Award in 2006 for his tireless support of U.S. soldiers and their families.

"USO-Metro is proud to recognize Craig Morgan, former Army Ranger, for his charitable efforts with our USO Merit Award," said Elaine Rogers, president of the USO of Metropolitan Washington. "It's wonderful to see someone who has served his country having such success in his professional life, while at the same time giving back to the community."

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Country singer, songwriter, and military veteran, Craig Morgan, brings a little bit of his life to every album he records.

"We titled my new album after its current single, Little Bit of Life, because that title truly encompassed the material on this record," says Morgan, who co-wrote four out of eleven songs for the project. "My musical ambition is to make a big deal out of the little things in life that are often overlooked. It's become my trademark of sorts. We just magnified it on this record."

Morgan will be performing at Nashville North USA in Taylorville on Sunday.



"We aim to provide an entertaining and upbeat family show at Nashville North USA," Morgan says. "That's what we're all about."

Morgan, a Kingston Springs, Tn. native, was a U.S. Army paratrooper by age 20 and earned sixteen medals for Meritorious Service, Commendation, and Achievement during his eleven years on active duty.

Morgan, who frequently performs at military bases both in the U.S. and abroad, received the 2006 USO Merit Award for his dedication to assisting others through his charitable works. Past recipients of the USO Merit Award include Steven Spielberg, Elizabeth Taylor, and Bob Hope.

"USO-Metro is proud to recognize Craig Morgan, former Army Ranger, for his charitable efforts with our USO Merit Award," said Elaine Rogers, president of the USO of Metropolitan Washington.. "It's wonderful to see someone who has served his country having such success in his professional life, while at the same time giving back to the community."

Morgan has recorded four studio albums, resulting in the singles, "Something To Write Home About," "God, Family, And Country," "Almost Home," "That's What I Love About Sunday," "Redneck Yacht Club," and "I Got You."

Morgan, an avid outdoorsman, was recently in a cross country motorcycle accident in May on Hazard Hill in Van Leer, Tn. Morgan sustained a plateau fracture of his right tibia after his bike hit a tree root while participating in the Mid-South Hare Scramble Series. Morgan did get back on his bike and finished the race in fifth place. Complications from the break required surgery in June with an eight week recovery in a wheelchair.

Always a trooper, Morgan continued to tour while his leg healed.

"I'm happy to say that I'm back to my normal routine and my leg bone and muscle are about 95-98% healed," Morgan says. "I'm riding again and plan on participating in a race in the near future. It's so funny, because in our industry everyone always says that when you get thrown off that proverbial horse you get right back on. But when I fell off my bike, everyone told me to stay off it."

For Morgan, country music has allowed him to become an observer of the small, simple things in everyday life.

"Much like everyone else, I think music has a huge impact on an individual," Morgan says. "It can take you somewhere you can't go, it can take you somewhere that you've been, and it can remind you of important things. One of my goals is help people envision all those little things that mean so much."

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© 2005

Country fans love Craig Morgan's music -
- no matter what day of the week it is.

"When I first heard That's What I Love About Sunday, I immediately felt attached to it unlike any other song," says Morgan of his Billboard Top Five country hit. "It talks about things that are important to me -- faith, family, friends, love, and relaxation. It's so close to my kind of living."

Morgan will introduce the Little Nashville Opry audience to his kind of living when he performs in Nashville on Saturday.

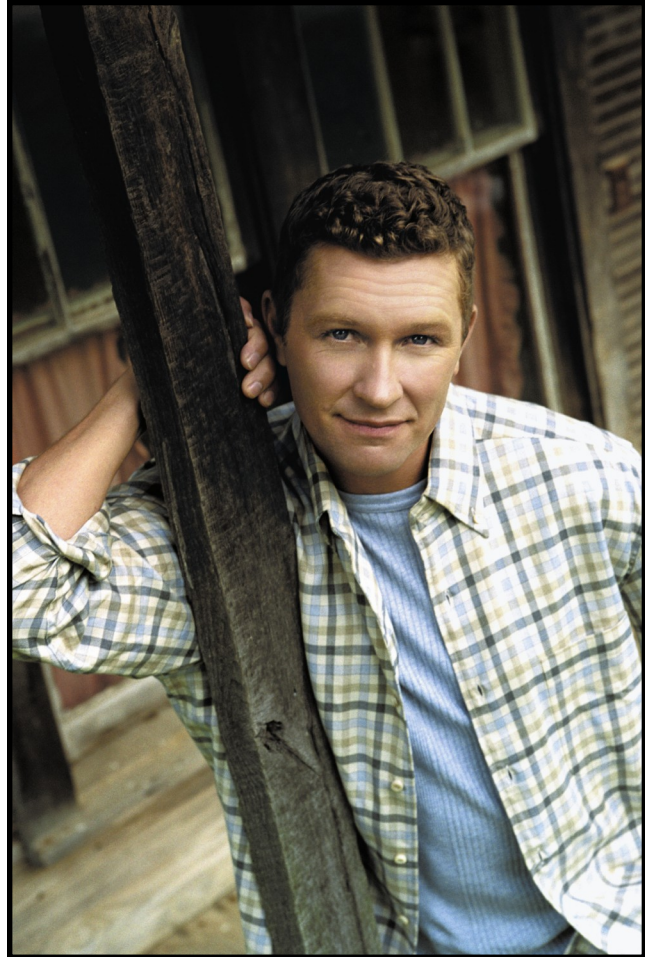
"The point I try to make on my current album, My Kind of Livin', is that the simple and ordinary things in life aren't so mundane after all," says Morgan, who co-wrote eight out of twelve songs for the project. "I try to take the little things that are so important, yet often overlooked, and make a big deal out of them."

Morgan was born in Kingston Springs, Tennessee, a rural area just a few miles outside of Nashville. His father -- a professional Nashville singer, songwriter, and musician -- played bass in Ralph Emery's "Pop Goes The Country" and "Young Country" television bands.

"I was around music so much when I was young that I didn't give it much thought at the time," Morgan says. "I was too busy being a kid, riding three-wheelers, hunting, and fishing. I didn't realize what a huge piece of my life music was until after I had grown up, left home, and started missing it."

Morgan joined the Army a few years after high school graduation and earned sixteen medals for Meritorious Service, Commendation, and Achievement during his ten year military stint.

While stationed in Korea, Morgan won a number of singing and songwriting contests and opened a Korean show for country group, Sawyer Brown.



"In Panama, I was sleeping two hours a night and getting shot at each day," Morgan says. "I couldn't even think about home until I was ready to bed down. But in Korea there was a lot of free time to think on what I'd left behind. For me, that meant memories of home: growing up in the woods, riding three-wheelers, fishing and hunting. I'd written songs before, but with so much time to reflect, I began to write about the things I'd known with more emotion and an appreciation for what they mean to me."

Upon completion of his enlistment, Morgan was hired to sing demos for other writers and publishing companies in Nashville.

In order to support his wife and four children, Morgan worked a variety of other jobs including a sheriff's deputy, plainclothes department store security officer, construction worker, and a Wal-Mart employee.

Morgan landed a recording contract with Atlantic Records, which shut its doors shortly after releasing his (2000) self-titled debut album and its three singles, "Something To Write Home About," "Paradise," and "I Want Us Back."

Morgan then signed with Broken Bow Records, resulting in the albums "I Love It," (2003), "My Kind Of Livin'," (2005), and the singles, "God, Family, And Country," "Almost Home," "Every Friday Afternoon," "Look At Us," "That's What I Love About Sunday," "Redneck Yacht Club," and current single, "I Got You."

"I Got You came about when I was on tour with Keith Urban," Morgan says. "We're both pretty high-energy, so I'd watch his show every night and think, 'Man, he does such a great job...I'd love to get a cut on his next record!' So I wrote this song with Phil O'Donnell and Tim Owens, but when I went into the studio to demo it, I realized that this was my song. This is one of the best songs we do live; it lets me do stuff with my guitar that I don't usually get to do."

Morgan, an avid outdoorsman, was recently in a cross country motorcycle accident May 14th on Hazard Hill in Van Leer, Tn. Morgan sustained a plateau fracture of his right tibia after his bike hit a tree root while participating in the final race of the season for the Mid-South Hare Scramble Series. Morgan did get back on his bike and finished the race in 5th place. Complications from the break required surgery on June 6 at the Baptist Hospital in Nashville, Tn.

Always a trooper, Morgan continues to tour while recovering for six to eight weeks in a wheelchair.

"Like most people, I have a lot going on every day," Morgan says. "And I'm the type of person that thrives under pressure. So, I guess you can say that my structured military background was perfect training for the music industry."

For Morgan, his kind of living has evolved into a musical observation of life that others enjoy listening to -- seven days a week.

"I aspire to be something between a stylist and the common man," Morgan says. "I didn't want to be solely a stylist, because I think that sometimes stylists can limit themselves. But I didn't want to be too generic either. My musical niche is located comfortably between the two."