

MONTGOMERY GENTRY
by Tamela Meredith Partridge
"The Times" newspaper
Ottawa, IL.
© 2008

Eddie Montgomery and Troy Gentry of country duo, Montgomery Gentry are looking forward to headlining the Lou's LaGrotto "Concerts For A Cause" at the Cedar Point Sportsmans Club in LaSalle on Saturday, June 14.

"Please tell all the people who are planning on attending our concert to go ahead and call in sick for the next day," Montgomery says. "Because we've been known to lock the doors, close up the gates, and just party all night long!"



Montgomery Gentry is the first in a two-part series of Lou's LaGrotto "Concerts For A Cause" for the 2008 summer season. The second concert featuring country duo, Sugarland, will be held on July 19th. Tickets are available for both concerts at Lou's LaGrotto restaurant in Peru or by calling (815)-223-3083.

"We don't call anybody fans, we call them friends," Montgomery says. "The one thing we love about our midwestern friends is that they know their country music. Which makes it totally awesome for us. Whenever we play in Illinois the audience really gets into it. They're ready to rock and they know our songs. It's unbelievable when we're on stage and all at once we hear everybody singing back to us louder than we're singing. It's just overwhelming."

Proceeds from the Montgomery Gentry concert will benefit The Illinois Motorcycle Freedom Run Organization, which raises funds for families of war veterans.

"This is the greatest country in the world," Montgomery says. "We can say and be anybody we want to in this country of ours. We definitely want to thank all of our American heroes overseas right now, and all our American heroes past and present."

Montgomery Gentry make no apologies for shaking up the country music scene with their rowdy onstage antics and blue-collar anthems of life, work, love, family, and patriotism.

"The friends that come to our concerts work hard at their jobs and often put in 70-80 hours a week," Montgomery says. "If they want to spend their hard earned money to come out and see us, we want them to have fun and leave the concert saying, 'Man, I just had an absolute blast!' "

Since their debut in '99, the Lexington, Ky., duo have released such hits as "Hillbilly Shoes," "She Couldn't Change Me," "My Town," "Speed," "If You Ever Stop Loving Me," "Gone," "Something To Be Proud Of," "Lucky Man," "What Do Ya Think About That?" and steadily rising Billboard Top Ten country single, "Back When I Knew It All."

"We sing about the good, the bad, the ugly, and the party on the weekend," Montgomery says. "We've never been known to be politically correct. What we always sing about is the working class people and the guys and girls going to school. That's what we're always going to be about. We're not going to sing anything that we haven't been through or that our friends out there don't go through everyday."

Montgomery Gentry's seventh studio album, "Back When I Knew It All," is scheduled for a June 10th release. Montgomery Gentry wrote or co-wrote two out of eleven songs for the new album, including "There's One In Every Crowd," and "God Knows Who I Am," featuring Lillie Mae Rische of Jypsi. The album also includes "I Pick My Parties," featuring country music superstar, Toby Keith.

"We've never let ego get in our way by saying that the song that we've written have to be on the album," Montgomery says. "We listened to over 4000 songs for this album. When we go in to listen to songs, we just put our songs in the pile with all the rest of them. If it stands up good enough to be one of them, then it does. If it don't, then we'll either re-write them or pitch them to somebody else. We always want to record the best album we can."

Through it all, Montgomery Gentry continue being the honky tonk poets of their generation.

"We want to be true to ourselves and to our music," Montgomery said. "And we want to do music that's still played twenty years from now. That's important to us. We have to do it our way, though. Our saying is, 'There's a right way, a wrong way, and the Montgomery Gentry way!' And the way we see it, no matter what, we're going to have fun with it, one way or another."