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# Twist Of Fate



Country music star John Berry will perform a show at WJ Ranch south of Yankton Sept. 7. Berry has had seven top 10 songs, including the No. 1 hit "Your Love Amazes Me." (Courtesy Photo)

## John Berry, Who Turned A Motorcycle Accident Into A Singing Career, To Perform At WJ Ranch

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**F**or most people, being in a motorcycle accident, breaking both legs and taking years to walk well again would not be considered a positive experience.

But for musician John Berry, ultimately, it was.

"It was pretty severe, but good things came out of it," the Watkinsville, Ga.-based singer said in a phone interview with the *Press & Dakotan*. "I couldn't go back to the job I was doing — working in an assembly plant — and all I could do was sit and play the guitar. So I ended up going into music full time."

After fully committing himself to music following his accident in 1981, Berry never looked back, and he embarked on a career that has spanned more than three decades and multiple genres. He has recorded more than 15 studio albums, including one platinum and two gold albums. He has charted 19 songs on the Billboard Charts, including his No. 1 single, "Your Love Amazes Me," and six additional Top 10 hits.

Berry will perform many of those hit songs when he takes the stage at 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 7, at WJ Ranch, located 7 miles south of Yankton off Highway 81. Opening for Berry will be Brad Colerick, a singer/guitarist and Nebraska native.

"This is going to be a great concert," said Jan Schiferl of WJ Ranch.

While Berry is widely known for many of his country

hits, the musician said his music covers many genres, and he doesn't believe he should be "boxed in" as a country artist.

"I was on country radio for years, but they didn't think I was country enough," he said with a laugh. "I sit on stage, banging on my guitar and singing my heart out, just laying it out there. I don't know how to explain it — that's just what I do."

Berry said he had multiple influences when first learning to play music, including John Denver, Neil Young, Jackson Browne and Cat Stevens.

"I grew up listening to a lot of acoustic music in the '70s, and I guess that's what I still do," he said.

In addition to those influences, Berry said his life and music also have been affected greatly by his relationship with God.

Berry said that his faith has helped him get through the numerous difficult times of his life, most notably an experience he underwent in 1993.

"I had really started to change around Christmas, and by February, I was really turning into somebody different," Berry said. "It kept progressing, and I didn't have a lot to do with my wife and my daughter. I didn't care about lot of things and was taking a bottle of Advil a day to try and get rid of the headaches. I quit eating, and between Christmas and May, I lost about 65 pounds."

In May, doctors found a cyst in the third ventricle of his brain.

What happened next was a "rebirth of sorts," Berry said. "I woke up from the surgery, and I was me again," he

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**JOHN BERRY**

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## Elk Point's Peacock To Headline State Fair Show Saturday

HURON — The South Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame presents 2010 Hall of Fame Inductee Elaine Peacock of Elk Point and friends — 2011 Inductee Larry Yarrow, Phyllis Hummel, Sandra Harmon, Mary Elder, Rachel Wood, and Alexa and Cody Griffith — live on the Dakotaland Stage gate 3 at the South Dakota State Fair at 6 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 31. The musicians will perform a children's program, a tribute to Patsy Cline, Gospel, patriotic, and a variety of country classic songs - All for a Free will donation to the show at the fair.

The South Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame (SDCMHoF) will also be at the South Dakota State Fair to recognize the 10th anniversary Inductees on the Dakotaland Stage at Gate 3. The event will be held Sunday, Sept. 1, starting at 6 p.m. The 2013 inductees are: Terry Stefferud, Teresa Endres, Jerry Berens, Hailey Steele, Dana Jensen, Kenny Frey, Don Quincey, Elva Meyers, Cliff Gullikson, Linda Lee, Verne Sheppard, and the Clay Creek Deaf Cowboy Band 35th anniversary year (Dawn Nelson, Sorney Sorensen, Tom Zoss, and Rick Martz).

The house band will be comprised of past inductees: Howie Gamber, Dave Bergquist, Roy King, Paul Engbretson, Ellie Mechels, Elaine Peacock, Darrel "Boomer" Hoiland, Troy "Clancy" White, Donnie Miller, Wilbur Foss and special guest, Sam Tulio.

Inductees are nominated by their peers, friends and family. They are then selected based on their performances, promotion, and support of country music in South Dakota. Musicians and performers are selected from around the entire state.

The Board of Directors for the South Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame include: Sara Sandwick, Dorothy Miles, Jodee Harris,

and Chair Wini Iverson. Assistants are Sandi Vander Wal, Ellen Robertson, and Mary Gorrrell along with many other volunteers who help us with events and preparations. The South Country Music Hall of Fame is a non-profit organization and all work is done on a voluntary basis. The organization relies primarily on donations for its support. South Dakota merchants and Vendors are used for the business needs whenever possible, and is the organizations way of supporting South Dakota.

The SDCMHoF also helps promote music programs for elementary schools in the state of South Dakota. Support went to four schools and the Yankton Children's Choir during the past year. Several fundraisers/music festivals were held with proceeds split between the school in the area and the South Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame. Some of the youngsters have performed on stage with the Hall of Famers and there is a group of youngsters who will be debuting at the South Dakota State Fair festivities.

It is also important to recognize the venues, without them, none of this would be possible. Following is the list of the venues who have hosted events: Lakeview Resort at Lake Poinsett, Yankton VFW, Gibbys at Tyn-dall, The Bullet at Sherman, Scotland VFW, Carlock Ballroom at Gregory, and the Desert Inn at Centerville. These venues also support the country musicians and bands and support country music in their communities. It's like everyone working together to impact and support the country music industry in the great state of South Dakota.

Fans are the greatest and most important element in all of this. Their loyalty and support is graciously appreciated. They also

help work the events, give suggestions, and help out in any way they can to continue to help the organization be successful.

Two new events are planned for the 2013 event. An Album of the Year category is planned and a bus trip is also planned. Leave the driving and parking to the buses. For details visit us on the web at <http://southdakotacountrymusichalloffame.org/> or contact the South Dakota Country Music Hall of Fame at 605-310-2441 or [sdcmhof@southdakotacountrymusichalloffame.org](mailto:sdcmhof@southdakotacountrymusichalloffame.org).

[southdakotacountrymusichalloffame.org/](http://southdakotacountrymusichalloffame.org/).

Bus groups from Scotland and Dell Rapids are planned to help get fans and musicians to the state fair. For details visit the web or contact the hall of fame board. The bus will stop directly at the stage for de-boarding. The bus fare will be free will donations plus cost of entrance to the fair. Entertainment will be provided by Mary Elder on the Scotland bus and Sandra Harmon on the Dell Rapids bus. Both trips will be a lot of fun.

Have A Safe And Fun  
Labor Day Weekend

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