



VETERANS DAY BENEFIT GALA

A Virtual Celebration

WEDNESDAY,
NOVEMBER
— 11 —



Posthumous London Medal Recipient Charlie Daniels (1936 – 2020)

From his Dove Award winning gospel albums to his genre-defining Southern rock anthems and his CMA Award-winning country hits, few artists have left a more indelible mark on America's musical landscape than Charlie Daniels. An outspoken patriot and beloved mentor to young artists, Charlie parlayed his passion for music into a multi-platinum career and a platform to support the military, underprivileged children and others in need.

Raised among the longleaf pines of North Carolina, Charlie began his career playing bluegrass music with the Misty Mountain Boys. After moving to Nashville in 1967, he began making a name for himself as a songwriter, session musician and producer. Elvis Presley recorded a tune Charlie co-wrote titled "It Hurts Me," which was released on the flip side of "Kissin' Cousins." He played on such landmark albums as Bob Dylan's Nashville Skyline and tried his hand at producing on the Youngbloods' Elephant Mountain and Ride the Wind.

His own unique voice as an artist emerged as Charlie recorded his self-titled solo album in 1970 for Capitol Records. Two years later he formed the Charlie Daniels Band and the group scored its first hit with the top ten "Uneasy Rider." Since then the CDB has populated radio with such memorable hits as "Long Haired Country Boy," "The South's Gonna Do It Again," "In America," "The Legend of Wooley Swamp" and of course, his signature song, "The Devil Went Down to Georgia," which won a Grammy for Best Country Vocal Performance by a Duo or Group in 1979 as well as single of the year at the Country Music Association Awards.

"I love what I do," Charlie once said of his 50-plus years in the music business. "I look forward to entertaining people. When show time gets here, I'm ready to go, ready to go play for them. It's a labor of love. I just thank God I make a living at what I enjoy doing."



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Whether performing in the hit 80s movie *Urban Cowboy*, singing on Easter Sunday at his local church or leading an all-star cast at one of his famed Volunteer Jams, Charlie just exuded joy whenever he stepped on stage and he was always been quick to provide a platform for other artists to shine. In

1974 he invited some friends to join him at Nashville's War Memorial Auditorium for an all-star concert he dubbed The Volunteer Jam. The event continued for years and was broadcast in the U.S. and internationally. Over the years, the Jam featured a diverse line up that included Willie Nelson, Ted Nugent, Roy Acuff, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Crystal Gayle, James Brown, Emmylou Harris, Amy Grant, George Thorogood, Kris Kristofferson, Little Richard, Tammy Wynette, Alabama, Oak Ridge Boys, B. B. King and the Allman Brothers.

As diverse as his live shows were, his discography also reflected Charlie's love of multiple genres. In 1994 he released his first Christian album, *The Door*, on Sparrow Records. The album won the Gospel Music Association's Dove Award for Best Country Album and "Two Out of Three" was named video of the year by the Christian Country Music Association. In 1997, Sony Wonder released Charlie's first children's album, "By The Light of The Moon: Campfire Songs and Cowboy Tunes'.

An astute businessman as well as talented musician, Charlie launched Blue Hat Records in 1997 with his longtime personal manager David Corlew. Over the next 15 years, the label released such memorable albums as *Blues Hat*, *Tailgate Party*, *Road Dogs*, *Fiddle Fire: 25 Years of the Charlie Daniels Band* and his first bluegrass album 2005's *Songs From the Longleaf Pines* and 2007's album *Deuces*, featuring duets with Brad Paisley, Gretchen Wilson, Bonnie Bramlett, Travis Tritt, Dolly Parton, Vince Gill, Brenda Lee and Darius Rucker.

Over the course of his career, Charlie received numerous accolades, including induction into the Grand Ole Opry and Musicians Hall of Fame. He was presented the Pioneer Award by the Academy of Country Music and was honored as a BMI Icon in recognition of his songwriting. He also received a star on the Music City Walk of Fame.

Any conversation with the legendary artist, however, rarely included any of his accomplishments. He would rather shine the spotlight on the many causes that are close to his heart. He was always a staunch supporter of the military, and for several years he headlined a special concert at David Lipscomb University benefiting the Yellow Ribbon

Program which provides scholarships for veterans. Each year there were surprise guests in addition to the announced line up. Among those who have supported Charlie Daniels for an evening of great



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music include Luke Bryan, Kellie Pickler, Clint Black, Jason Aldean, Chris Young, Rascal Flatts, Lee Greenwood, Darryl Worley, the Grascals, and actor Gary Sinise.

Charlie also lent his time and talent to numerous other charitable organizations, including the Jason Foundation Golf Classic, an organization that targets teen suicide prevention, and the Galilean

Children's Home in Liberty, KY, which provides a home for abused and neglected children. "I've been affiliated with them for a long, long time and it's just a great place," Charlie said of the home founded by Jerry and Sandy Tucker. "They take in babies whose mothers are going to prison. They give kids a good stable Christian home and love them. It's just a wonderful place."

Charlie was also the host for The Charlie Daniels Celebrity Golf Classic & Angelus Concert in Hudson, FL, a benefit for The Angelus, a full-time residential facility and day school program for the severely handicapped. He was a member of the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Professional Advisory Board and was a longtime supporter of the T. J. Martell Foundation and its numerous events aiding cancer research. He was the headliner many years for the Christmas 4 Kids concert at the Ryman Auditorium, a fundraiser to provide a happy holiday for needy children.

In 2014, Charlie Daniels with David Corlew founded The Journey Home Project, a 501(c)(3) non-profit to help Veterans of the United States Armed Forces. In early 2016 it was announced that he would become the newest inductee to the Country Music Hall of Fame, along with Randy Travis and Fred Foster

Charlie was proud to use his celebrity status to aid worthy causes. "I have a very unique opportunity because of being in the music community, you try to give back to some extent. I do feel like people should. We should all do as much as we can."

Daniels stayed on the road -- and stayed online -- through 2018 and 2019, playing the 20th edition of his Volunteer Jam in March 2018. He planned to do another Volunteer Jam in 2020, but it was pushed back to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A few weeks after the announcement of the rescheduling, Charlie Daniels died of a massive hemorrhagic stroke on July 6, 2020. He was 83 years old.