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Brewer Returns To Martin for Festival

By Admin User (<http://www.nwtntoday.com/author/user/>) | July 17, 2018 | 0 (<http://www.nwtntoday.com/2018/07/17/brewer-returns-to-martin-for-festival/#respond>)



Larry Brewer's almost 45 years in music started with gigs at the McKenzie bowling alley and Martin clubs before playing before stadium crowds. Now, he's content to solo at venues close to his home in Madison, Miss., and excited to be part of the Tennessee Soybean Festival lineup in August.

Brewer's homecoming concert is scheduled for 8 p.m., Aug. 31, at The Lindell in downtown Martin.

Area fans who are familiar with Brewer's days with bands Raisin' Kane and The Windows will not be disappointed if they are waiting to hear favorites such as the award-winning "Hello, Hello" and much requested "Motorcar."

"With technology, I can do the tracks at home, and have a 'band' behind me and it's just me," said Brewer of the wizardry that allows the singer/songwriter to produce the sound fans have loved since the mid-1970s.

Born in Chicago, Brewer and his family moved to Martin in 1968. The Westview High School graduate says he loved music from an early age and, in high school, started playing in bands with local friends "just jamming, having fun and learning."

His first popular band was Raisin' Kane that performed together from 1975 until 1980 and recorded the album "It's About Time" in 1978. In 1980, he started his own band, The Windows, with brother Alan on drums, Paul Doege on bass and Kirby Jackson on keyboards.

"I was writing a lot of songs and we recorded many demos at Audio Creations in Paducah. We were gaining experience being in the studio," he noted. "The next thing we knew we were opening for The Beach Boys, Jefferson Starship, Peter Frampton, Badfinger from England and countless other artists."

Next came the album "Running Alone" recorded at Ardent Studios in Memphis and talks with major record labels were showing promise.

Then tragedy struck. Twenty-three-year-old band member Kirby Jackson was killed in a car accident on his way home to McKenzie Aug. 15, 1987.

"We were devastated. Kirby was our friend, and he was a fantastic musician and writer. Everything came to a halt," remembered Brewer.

Eventually the band's manager and friends helped them regroup. They hired Edgar Riley Jr., a keyboardist from Texas, and released the album with no help from a major label.

"We toured to promote the record, and it sold incredibly well and is still selling today!" said an obviously pleased Brewer.

After 15 years, the band ended its run and Brewer continued as a solo act.

Of his career longevity during a time when bands were known for excess and eventual burnout, Brewer says he was paying attention.

"Luckily, I knew better. If you want to stay in the business you've got to be disciplined," he said. "If you love music, choose the music. I chose music."

To up-and-coming musicians today, who look to Brewer for tips, he shares from experience. "There's ups and downs. Be prepared for the downs. You can be in a coliseum one night and then a club with 25 people in the audience the next."

These days, Brewer enjoys the luxury of continuing to perform and yet sleep in his own bed at night, as he has traded touring for the active local music scene in Miss. However, he says he is looking forward to returning to Martin and seeing old friends at the Soybean Festival. Brother Alan, who is retired from the music business and still living in Dresden, will be in the audience.

Brewer has written a large catalog of songs including "Hello, Hello," which won the Jackson Mississippi Music Awards Pop Song of the Year in 1983. Brewer's song "Motorcar" was the number-one requested song on many radio stations across the southeast. In 1996, he re-recorded this song for his debut solo album entitled "Traveling at the Speed of Life....." He has since released four more solo albums: "World Going Crazy" in 2003, "Lucky Ever After" in 2008 and "Waxing Ardent" in 2012. His latest album, "Shine," was released in December 2017.

His song "Brand New Revolution" was included on the compilation CD, "Songs for a Better Planet Vol. IV – Gulf Coast Edition." He has had songs placed in TV and movies including "Raising Hope," "Bad Teacher," "Community," "Halt and Catch Fire," "Standing Up" and several others.

Brewer's music is available on iTunes, CDBaby.com, Amazon, and Spotify.

Tickets for the Aug. 31 performance are \$10 and can be purchased online at tsoybeanfestival.org. Seating is limited.

Turn to the *Weakley County Press* for continuing updates on the *Tennessee Soybean Festival*.

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