



In this image released by the Weather Channel, the album "The Weather Channel Presents: The Best of Smooth Jazz," is shown.

What's bright in the forecast?

The Weather Channel's new CD of smooth jazz

By JOHN GEROME
Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Umbrella? Check. Galoshes? Got 'em. Scarf? Sure thing.

Smooth jazz? In the CD player.

The Weather Channel released its first CD this fall: "The Weather Channel Presents: The Best of Smooth Jazz."

Think of the 12 tunes as a soundtrack to the elements. Some are hot and sultry, others cool and crisp. Some are sunny, some blue.

The songs are among the channel's most requested selections and play during the forecast fixture "Local on the 8s" that airs six times an hour. It's the cue that draws you to the TV set when you want to find out whether you should take along that jacket when you leave home.

Although the disc features jazz artists such as Chick Corea, Jeff Lorber, Dave Koz and Najee, not all of the music played on "Local on the 8s" is jazz. Sometimes it's light rock or holiday tunes. But almost all of it is instrumental.

"We tested some vocals, but the consumers didn't like it," said Shari Pace, the vice president of licensing for the cable channel. "When I travel to a different city and have the Weather Channel on, the music is comforting to me. I like the calmness of it. When there are vocals with it, it changes."

Released in October on Nashville-based Midas Records, the CD is available online and at Barnes & Noble and other retail stores. It's currently No. 2 on Billboard magazine's contemporary jazz chart.

The Weather Channel has been around for 25 years and has had music from the beginning, when employees would dip into their own record collections. It was obvious from the start that viewers liked it.

"When we'd play 'Peanuts' (Vince Guaraldi's 'Linus and Lucy' theme) they went bananas," Pace recalled. "The phones started ringing."

These days the Weather Channel has an employee they call the "Music Man" — Steve Hurst — whose job is to find the right tunes. During the day, his selections tend to be light and upbeat. In the evening they're slower and more sultry. Late at night they're even more mellow.

"It was fun to add songs that viewers wouldn't usually expect to hear," said Hurst, who chose the cuts for the jazz CD based on viewer response. "Phish fans were coming out of the woodwork the first time we played one of their songs."

He started making copies of each month's playlist available to people who wrote in wanting to know the name of a song or artist they'd heard. Musicians also began sending in tapes, many of which he'd use. He receives about 80 unsolicited music previews a month.

Three tracks on the new record — Mark Krumowski's "Wait a Minute," Ryan Farish's "Holding Hands" and Jeanne Ricks' "Simple Pleasure" — were done exclusively for the Weather Channel. The others were previously released.

Burning bright

Community Food Bank, local musicians harmonize for the hungry on holiday CD

By JENNIFER CHANCELLOR
World Scene Writer

If you're looking for some of the best holiday music by some of the most popular area artists, well, here it is.

Performances on this CD shine like brilliant, twinkling stars on a crisp wintry evening, and you can listen to the music — live — Wednesday.

The Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma invites all music lovers to ignite the holiday season in style at its "Holiday Harvest 2007" CD release party Wednesday at the Blue Dome Diner, 313 E. Second Street, in downtown Tulsa. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m.

Many of the artists who appear on this year's CD will perform throughout the evening. They'll include the jazz and blues crooner Rebecca Ungerman, the young and talented Pendleton Family Fiddlers, the honey-voiced Pam VanDyke Crosby, the "traditional Okie Irish" act Cairde na Gael, the folk rockers the Good Intentions, the singer-songwriter Jeff Graham, the pop rockers the Red Alert and this year's "Gimme the Mike!" winner, Angela Hendrix.

The \$10 cover charge will include a free copy of the CD, said Cindy Stevens, the food bank's communications manager.

This is the fourth year for this project, and this year's CD features a variety of holiday favorites and many original songs from country to rock to Celtic to jazz.

The CD includes cuts from the world music act Citizen Mundi and the Tulsa "super-group" and ornery Christmas rockers Team Galaxy. Included is the glittering, original Hanukkah song "Keep the Flame Alive," written and performed by Rebecca Ungerman and Frank Brown.

A local artist, Margaret Aycock, donated the cover artwork, the original of which will be auctioned at the release party.

Jim Tilly, a Tulsa lawyer and part-time musician, donated his time to produce the CD again this year, Stevens said.

Valcour Sound Recording Studio, Frank Brown of 17th Street Studios, David Teegarden and Natura Digital Studios also donated their services for the cause.

All proceeds will help fund the many Food Bank programs designed to help eliminate hunger and food insecurity in eastern Oklahoma.

If you can't make the show, the CD will be sold for \$15 during the holiday season at all Tulsa-area Borders bookstores, Barnes & Noble stores, Akin's Natural Foods Market and Tea & Magnolias at the Riverwalk Crossing in Jenks. You can also order a copy by calling (918) 585-2800, ext. 106 or going online to www.tulsa-world.com/FoodBank.

The Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma is a private, nonprofit organization that is committed to ending hunger in eastern Oklahoma. It distributes donated food and grocery items to 425 nonprofit partner programs, providing more than 530,000 meals per month in 24 counties. In 2006, the Food Bank distributed more than 9 million pounds of food.

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ROBERT S. CROSS / Tulsa World

Rebecca Ungerman and her Hanukkah song "Keep the Flame Alive" will be on the "Holiday Harvest" CD.



cd release show

"Holiday Harvest 2007" by Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma
When: Doors open 5:30 p.m. Wednesday
Where: Blue Dome Diner, 313 E. Second Street, in downtown Tulsa
Admission: \$10 donation, which includes CD
More online: www.tulsa-world.com/FoodBank

The Red Alert is Christy Hanewinkel and Hank Hanewinkel.

KELLY KERR / Tulsa World



Angela Hendrix is the 2007 "Gimme the Mike!" winner.

ROBERT S. CROSS / Tulsa World

Keys opens door on holiday rush for music sales

By TODD MARTENS
Los Angeles Times

The holiday season has arrived for the music industry, as a dozen albums on the U.S. pop chart this past week sold more than 100,000 copies, a rare feat in a year when albums reached the No. 1 spot eight times with sales of less than six figures. Last week's sales were fueled by a host of hits compilations, including a

new collection from Led Zeppelin, and a pair of divas.

R&B singer Alicia Keys led the charge of four new arrivals in the Top 10. Her "As I Am" landed at No. 1 after selling 742,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. That's second only to the 957,000 first-week figure that Kanye West's "Graduation" posted in September.

This is Keys' fourth-straight album to make its de-

but at No. 1. Keys' tally more than tripled the numbers posted by the return of Celine Dion. Her first new pop album in four years, "Taking Chances," entered at No. 3, selling 214,000 copies.

Behind Dion at No. 4 with 208,000 copies was the 26th edition in the "Now! That's What I Call Music" hits compilation series. Led Zeppelin's CD/DVD package "Mother'ship" landed at No. 7, selling

136,000 copies. It gave Zeppelin's vocalist Robert Plant dual representation inside the Top 30, as his pairing with the bluegrass singer Alison Krauss, "Raising Sand," was at No. 25 after selling 49,000 copies.

The much-hyped return of Duran Duran, "Red Carpet Massacre," which features contributions from Timbaland and Justin Timberlake, entered the chart at No. 36,

selling 29,000 copies.

Other notable arrivals this past week include an odds-and-ends compilation from the Killers, "Sawdust," at No. 12 (82,000 copies) and a James Taylor retrospective, "One Man Band," at No. 17 (63,000 copies).

The previous No. 1, Jay-Z's "American Gangster," fell to No. 8, suffering a 69 percent sales drop to 131,000 copies.