Charlie Daniels is heading down to Georgia

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
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The Charlie Daniels Band will be performing at the Anderson Music Hall inside the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds this Saturday, Sept. 24

HIAWASSEE – Charlie Daniels is no stranger to the art of Country Music, as he's been touching the hearts of fans for decades, beginning with his best-known hit, "The Devil Went Down To Georgia."

Daniels, of Nashville, will be performing in the Anderson Music Hall at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Saturday, Sept. 24. The 7 p.m. show will also feature the talents of the Thomas Fountain Band, a Modern Country act.

While this is not Daniels' first trip to Hiawassee, it is something he looks forward to every time. Growing up in a small southern town himself, Daniels equates connections made in areas like Hiawassee to that of a homecoming.

"We've been to Hiawassee several times and I love it," said Daniels. "It's my kind of place. I'm a small-town guy and I like rural areas. I was raised in that kind of atmosphere. I feel right at home there."

While the music industry has grown and changed throughout the years, Daniels does not see this progression as negative, but rather as a challenge to continue creating music that can still pluck the heartstrings of listeners.

Daniels' latest endeavor, his recently released album "Nighthawk," draws fans into the typically unseen world of the everyday cowboy, sans gun slinging and bar fights.

"Nighthawk is something that's been in the making for a while now," said Daniels. "I'd always intended to do a cowboy album. I tried to get songs that I felt would lend themselves to what I was trying to say with the album.

"It's a working cowboy album, not so much about gunfighters and that sort of thing, but songs that tell stories. I kept collecting songs for about 15 or 20 years, and after a while I had enough to create the album, so I just went ahead and did it."

With Daniels' trademark lively jumping fiddle playing and swinging banjo picking, this new album gives fans a look into the softer edges of life that Daniels holds so dear.

Concertgoers can rest assured they will hear some of these new tunes at the Saturday show, along with traditional Daniels hits.

"Nighthawk" is not the only big thing happening in Daniels' life this year.

Recently, Daniels was informed he would be receiving the honor of being one of the 2016 inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame, accompanied by fellow musicians Randy Travis and Fred Foster.

"About any good adjective you can think of applies to it," said Daniels. "It's something that I never had any way of knowing would ever happen to me. It's such a big moment for me.

"It's hard for me to articulate just how I feel about it. It's all been so much fun, and the industry has been very good to me.

"God has blessed me with something that I really do enjoy doing for a living. To be recognized by your peers, it's a tremendous blessing."

The Country Music Hall of Fame Museum will also be paying tribute to the Country Music legend with an exhibit in his honor, "Million Mile Reflections." The exhibit is scheduled to open Sept. 23 and run through March of 2017.

Along with the accolades of the year, Daniels will celebrate his 80th birthday in October. While this might be a moment of reflection for some, Daniels says that he strives to live in the present and focus on what is right in front of him – the music.

"Going out in front of people and performing songs that I've written, and having people react to the songs and enjoy them, that's what I love," said Daniels. "When I say this, it's not a cliché, it's an absolute truth – I love this business.

"I love getting on stage in front of people. I love entertaining people, and them loving what I do and having a good time. I'm really addicted to it.

"That's why I have no intention of ever retiring. I have no desire to retire. As long as it's the good Lord's will and people want to hear me, I'll be out here playing this music."

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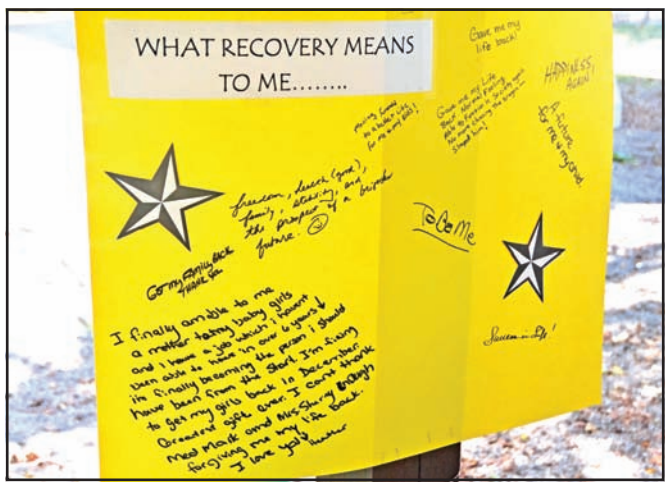

Handwritten signs highlighting "What Recovery Means to Me" could be found all around the Meeks Park event

asking the residents of Union County to celebrate September as Union County Recovery Month.

The theme for this year's Union County Recovery Month is "Join Voices for Recovery: Our Families, Our Stories, Our Recovery."

"Union County Recovery Month spreads the message that behavioral health is essential to health and one's overall wellness, and that prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can recover," the proclamation reads. "The impact of substance abuse and addiction is apparent in our local community. Through Union County Recovery Month, people become more aware and able to recognize the sins of substance abuse and addiction, which can lead more people into needed treatment."

In attendance at last week's recovery month event were representatives from MedMark Treatment Centers of Blairsville, the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition, Union/Towns S.A.F.E. (Support in Abusive Family Emergencies), Grace Counseling and Recovery Group in Blue Ridge, and Avita Community Partners.

MedMark of Blairsville is located on Shoe Factory Road, next door to Union County Fire Department Station No. 1, and is northeast Georgia's leading narcotic treatment center for individuals who are dependent or addicted to opiates and prescription pain medication.

The treatment staff at MedMark includes a Medical Director, Program Director, Clinical Supervisor, nurses and counselors to help each patient address their individual needs and help them achieve their goals.

MedMark's philosophy is based on the fact that methadone and/or buprenorphine combined with counseling is one of the best treatment options available to opioid dependent individuals.

For more details, you can contact MedMark at (706) 781-6987.

The Union County Anti-Drug Coalition (UCADC) focuses on community education and awareness of substance abuse.

"We're here today to share information for families, particularly parents that want to gather information about drug problems and how it affects their teens, how they can be aware, and hopefully prevent it from happening in their family," Paula Padgett said.

The UCADC also holds youth events and submits a weekly article in the *North Georgia News*. For more info, the UCADC may be contacted at ucadc@brmemc.net.

S.A.F.E. provide services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims in Towns and Union counties. S.A.F.E. has served residents of Towns and Union since 1989 by providing safe shelter for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

S.A.F.E. offers a comprehensive array of services including Legal Advocacy, Social Services Referrals, Survivor Support Groups, Parenting Support, Child Advocacy, Outreach and Education, and Medical Advocacy for victims of sexual assault.

S.A.F.E. operates the Butterfly House Child Advocacy Center as well as two local thrift stores that support victim services programs. S.A.F.E. relies on community support and volunteers to carry out its programs.

They have also started an anti-bullying campaign, and the nonprofit hosted a Friendship Festival on Aug. 20 at Nottely Marina.

The Recovery Group is a Christian 12-step recovery group that meets every Tuesday in Blue Ridge at the Morganton Baptist Association. The Grace Counseling Center began in 1999 and was founded for the purpose of bringing healing to hurting families, single-parent homes, teen groups, and the addicted. Grace offers board certification in the following areas: marriage and family counseling, substance abuse and addiction therapy, crisis and abuse therapy, along with death and grief therapy.

For more info you can visit their "Recovery for the Appalachians" Facebook page or contact them by phone at (706) 632-5741.

Avita Community Partners offers Adult Behavioral Health Programs and serves Union and Towns counties, providing psychiatric treatment, counseling, and other recovery support services for adults with mental illnesses, emotional disorders, and addictive diseases.

They also assist persons with disabilities with finding, getting and keeping a job, as well as, participating in community activities and becoming as independent as possible.

Avita offers youth services for children and adolescents, and their parents or guardians, with behavioral, emotional, and substance abuse disorders.

For more details, you may contact Avita's Blairsville office at (706) 745-5911, or visit their website at www.gamtns.org.