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The Dallas Morning News

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Rising star Katie Mariah shines at CD release party

STAFF REPORT

Katie Mariah's CD *Hit the Ground Running*, was not the only thing released on Feb. 6, writes Brad Davis at neighborsgo.com.

Mariah and her management team, Wayrock, chose Sabine Creek Ranch in Royse City as the venue for the local country rock artist to debut all of the tracks from her new CD. The event drew more than 200 people. Royse City and the surrounding areas released at least 100 new fans who came out to see Mariah perform for the first time.

The room was filled with press coverage (including *neighborsgo* editor Dawn Redig), a local radio DJ and a television producer looking at Mariah for a possible TV show. Record producer Cary Pierce was also on hand.

"It was an incredible experience, and I am so grateful to the people for coming out to celebrate this release with me," Mariah said.

Davis described the scene, saying that as concertgoers drove toward Sabine Creek Ranch, they followed a spotlight shining in the evening sky, letting everyone know there was a bright star on the grounds.

Once parked, there was a line to get into the event, and guests received a free copy of Mariah's new CD, free popcorn provided by Popcorn Papa in Garland and the opportunity to buy one of the rising star's T-shirts or 8x10 photos. Coffee and homemade cookies were



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MINDI LONG

After rocking the house, band members Drew D'Anna, Daniel De La Rocha and Toby Benso pose for fan photos at Katie Mariah's CD release party on Feb. 6.

supplied by the Well Coffee Lounge in Royse City.

An autograph signing followed the concert, and then Mariah, friends and fans headed to Blue Canyon at The Harbor for an after party.

"Mariah is now catching her breath and preparing for the shooting of her second music video," Davis wrote. The three-day shoot begins Feb. 27, and according to Wayrock, a portion of the video may be shot locally, so stay tuned!

Brad Davis, a frequent neighborsgo.com contributor and owner of Frozen Fire Films, contributed to this story. Read his full account at neighborsgo.com/stories/29949.



STAFF PHOTO BY DAWN REDIG

Katie Mariah signs autographs and talks with fans at Sabine Creek Ranch.

Singer chronicles journey in blog at neighborsgo.com

Though singer/songwriter Katie Mariah is a native of Enid, Okla. this southern belle with a soul-filled country sound now considers Rockwall her second home.

Mariah actually studied opera at a young age in New York City, then came back to her roots in the Midwest. She broke into the Dallas music scene after being discovered in a music video contest. Local appearances have included playing with Evenmark in Dallas, singing at Hog City Deli in Rockwall, doing a show at Crazy Horse Saloon in Rowlett, entertaining residents at Summer Ridge Assisted Living Center and performing with the Heritage Christian Academy show choir at a fundraising event. Check out a video sampling of Mariah's live performances at neighborsgo.com/video/1600.

Follow the journey of this rising star as Katie Mariah chronicles her experiences in "From Here to There," her weekly blog at neighborsgo.com.

- Dawn Redig, *neighborsgo* editor

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Journey's drummer to host concert, clinic

Rockwall-Heath High School will host a percussion concert and clinic Feb. 28 featuring rock/jazz musician Steve Smith of Journey fame. Over his career, Smith has played on many hits with such diverse artists as Mariah Carey, Bryan Adams, Zucchero, Claudio Baglioni, Andrea Bocelli, Ray Price, Corrado Rustici and Savage Garden. Concert tickets \$12 at the door,

\$8 in advance. Concert is at 7:30 p.m. The percussion clinic is free and starts at 5 p.m. Call 469-698-2619 or e-mail aeldridge@rockwallisd.org.

VoiceMale reunites at First Christian

VoiceMale, a select male quartet ensemble of tenor and bass voices, will host a reunion concert at 4:30 p.m. Feb. 22 at First Chris-

tian Church in Rockwall. The group performs a wide variety of music from various periods including sacred and secular music. Donations are appreciated.

Stars on the Rock stargazing party

Join members of the Texas Astronomical Society at sunset March 1 as they gather at Harry Myers Park, near the gazebo at the

second parking lot, with their telescopes pointed at interesting sky objects. Free stargazing events will continue the fourth Sunday of each month, weather permitting.

For more information, contact Joe Lalumia at joelalumia@sbcglobal.net or visit texasastro.org.

Rockwall Idol begins March 5

The Soroptimists of Rockwall

are at it again, raising money for women and children of Rockwall County through a partnership with the Helping Hands Clinic. Preliminary competitions for Rockwall Idol begin March 5 and continue March 12 and 19 at the Hilton Bella Harbor. Tickets are \$5 at the door. To view clips from last year's competition and to register to compete, go to rockwallidol.com. The final competition will be at the Womenaid Gala on March 28. Gala tickets are \$60.