

Chart toppers

The top country and pop albums and singles according to Billboard Magazine for the week ending June 12.

ALBUMS

1. Glee: The Music — Glee Cast
2. Stone Temple Pilots — Stone Temple Pilots
3. My World 2.0 — Justin Bieber
4. Need You Now — Lady Antebellum
5. Raymond V Raymond — Usher
6. The Fame — Lady Gaga
7. Exile on Main St. — The Rolling Stones
8. Brothers — The Black Keys
9. Live at the Troubadour — Carole King & James Taylor
10. Distant Relatives — Nas and Damian Jr. Gong Marley

SINGLES

1. OMG — Usher, will.i.am
2. California Gurls — Katy Perry, Snoop Dogg
3. Airplanes — B.o.B, Hayley Williams of Paramore
4. Your Love is My Drug — Ke\$ha
5. Break Your Heart — Taio Cruz, Ludacris
6. Alejandro — Lady Gaga
7. Nothin' On You — B.o.B, Bruno Mars
8. Bulletproof — La Roux
9. Hey, Soul Sister — Train
10. Not Afraid — Eminem

COUNTRY ALBUMS

1. Need You Now — Lady Antebellum
2. No. 1s ... And Then Some — Brooks & Dunn
3. The Foundation — Zac Brown Band
4. Rebel Within — Hank Williams III
5. Play On — Carrie Underwood
6. Revolution — Miranda Lambert
7. Love Heals — Wynonna
8. Fearless — Taylor Swift
9. Pass the Jar — Zac Brown Band
10. Crazy Heart — Various Artists

COUNTRY SINGLES

1. The House That Built Me — Miranda Lambert
2. The Man I Want to Be — Chris Young
3. I Gotta Get to You — George Strait
4. Crazy Town — Jason Aldean
5. Gimme That Girl — Joe Nichols
6. Water — Brad Paisley
7. Keep On Lovin' You — Steel Magnolia
8. She Won't Be Lonely Long — Clay Walker
9. Rain is a Good Thing — Luke Bryan
10. Unstoppable — Rascal Flatts

EAST COAST COUNTDOWN

1. The Engine — The Art Of
2. Architects — Sleepy Driver
3. Coming Clean Tonight — Chris Brown
4. Dance the Dark Away — Lennie Gallant
5. Feel This Good — Stereo Airing
6. What I Am — Dwight Deon
7. Depend on This — Ruth Minnikin and Her Bandwagon
8. Black Camera — Wintersleep
9. Sweet on You — Melanie Doane
10. Bee in October — Clinton Charlton

What's Happening?

WHAT'S HAPPENING? Nova Scotia's complete guide to arts and entertainment, is compiled weekly. Send submissions at least 10 days before the event to What's Happening?, The Chronicle Herald, Box 610, Halifax, N.S., B3J 2T2. Or fax 902-426-1158, or email listings@herald.ca.



Saskatchewan jazz-folk singer Little Miss Higgins (a.k.a. Jolene Higgins) will be performing at the King's Theatre in Annapolis Royal on Saturday at 8 p.m., The Carleton in Halifax on Sunday and Monday at 9 p.m. and Truro's Marigold Centre on June 19, at 7:30 p.m.

(GLEN W. THOMPSON)

Tornados, tumbleweeds and Little Miss Higgins

PRAIRIE COMIC Brent Butt once complained in song that nothing rhymes with Saskatchewan, although he didn't try working "that moustache you won" in there somewhere, which would probably work if you're OK with "door hinge" as a rhyme for "orange."

Whether or not the former Corner Gas star has a valid complaint, it hasn't stopped Jolene Higgins from finding rhyming inspiration in her home province. This week the jazz-blues singer-guitarist from Nokomis, Sask., returns to Nova Scotia with a new album of original material, aptly titled *Across the Plains*, under her stage name **Little Miss Higgins**.

She is performing with guitarist **Foy Taylor** at the King's Theatre in Annapolis Royal on Saturday at 8 p.m., The Carleton in Halifax on Sunday and Monday at 9 p.m. and Truro's Marigold Centre on Saturday, June 19, at 7:30 p.m.

On previous records, Higgins has sung about tank towns, old tractors and fields of barley, and *Across the Plains* is sprinkled with references to tornados, tumbleweeds and Prairie thaws, sung with a bold and clear old-timey twang. Whether she's accompanied by horns and muck bucket bass, or singing the seductive *Gather My Fruit* over stomps and claps, Higgins' songs ring with an authenticity informed by the old lesson "write what you know" that she learned in her theatre school days.

"I've used that ever since, that's how I started writing," says Higgins. "I just taught songwriting at the Hornby Island Blues Workshop in B.C., and every morning my students would come to my

NOW HEAR THIS



STEPHEN COOKE

cabin by the ocean and I'd say, 'Let's write a song!' because that's the best way to do it, just write.

"They asked what they should be inspired by, so I sent them down to the beach for 15 minutes to do some research. They came back, and we created this form for the song to fit into, and we all wrote it together from what was happening around us. It was pretty awesome."

Higgins' method extends to the song that listeners tend to remember most from her shows, a description of the difficulty of finding ladies' undergarments in her small town called *Bargain! Shop Panties*.

"I'm writing it thinking it's the stupidest thing in the world, and it turns out to be the people's favourite song," she sighs. "When we first started playing it around home, I was thinking, 'I don't know, this is pretty silly' but everybody loved it and thought it was hilarious.

"I thought, 'Well, it looks like Saskatchewan likes it.'"

Across the Plains isn't all sunshine and laughter, however. *Snowin' Today: A Lament for Louis Riel* is a meditation on the fate of the Metis leader and the struggle of his people, and *Hope You Don't Feel Blue* was inspired by history books from a First Nations perspective, like Colum-

bus and *Other Cannibals* by Jack D. Forbes and Ronald Wright's *Stolen Continents*.

"It's an intense topic," says Higgins, who doesn't pull any punches in the lyrics. "Isolation plays a big part in there still being racism and prejudice and stereotypes. There's not a lot of native people here, although there's a reserve not far away, but it's still like cowboys and Indians out here.

"We need to do a bit of healing. It's not about blaming people, but trying to help them to understand. That's why I ask the question, 'What if someone came and took your tractor and your truck and told you that you couldn't farm anymore and you've gotta go live somewhere else?' But who knows if the people who need to hear that song ever will?"

Also bringing songs and stories from the West this weekend is Alberta singer-songwriter **Cori Brewster** whose new CD *Buffalo St.* is full of songs inspired by the people and history of Banff and the Canadian Rockies. Brewster's homespun tunes will be accompanied by Toronto-based folk singer **Eve Goldberg**, performing on Saturday at the Union Street Cafe in Berwick and Monday at Halifax's Company House.

Visit coribrewster.com for more information and *Buffalo St.* song samples.

While we're on a Prairie kick, I should mention that **Sights and Sounds**, featuring Andrew Neufeld from Winnipeg hardcore band *Comeback Kid*, plays a pair of Halifax shows on Friday. More dramatic rock than blistering punk, the quartet (including



Paul Quarrington THE SONGS (Cordova Bay Records) Canadian author and musician Paul Quarrington passed away in January, and the last couple of months have been a posthumous celebration with the *Book-Shorts* documentary *A Life in Music* out on DVD this month, a new book of musical musings, *Cigar Box Banjo*, and now a CD simply titled *The Songs*. Even with the end in sight, Quarrington never stopped telling stories, and these tunes show a master's hand with vivid portraits carved out of the stuff of life. Stuff like *Friendly Giant*, porn stars and bass fishing, he could never resist a good hook. (scooke@herald.ca)

members of *Sick City* and *Figure Four*) plays an early show at the all-ages Pavilion with **A Sight for Sewn Eyes, For the Hollow and Coming of Age** and a 19+ set at Coconut Grove with *A Sight for Sewn Eyes*.

(scooke@herald.ca)



For Kids

Academy Camp Experience: Ross Creek Centre for the Arts is looking for 10 African Nova Scotian and 10 First Nations youth to participate in a two-week long academy camp experience and star in a film. July 26-Aug. 6. Application deadline is Tuesday. 582-3842, artscentre.ca.
Activities at the Glooscap Heritage Centre: Youth Drumming Group, for ages 12-19, Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m.; Regalia Drop-in

Group, all ages. Fridays, 3-4:30 p.m. The Glooscap Heritage Centre, 65 Treaty Trail, Millbrook. 843-3493.

Alderney Landing Children's Fine Art and Theatre Camps: Registration is now open. **Multi-cultural Art Camp:** July 5-9, Explore the world through art making and create Chinese Dragons, Japanese Kites, African drum, more; **Haunted Sculpture Art Camp:** July 12-16 and July 19-23. Create larger-than-life haunted sculptures based on the spooky characters from *Bluenose Ghosts* by Helen Creighton; **Theatre Camp:** July 19-23 and July 26-30. Act, direct, sing and dance your way to stardom. Play games and perform skits while preparing for the final performance on Friday

afternoon. Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. 461-8401, alderneylanding.com/theatre/theatrevents.html.

Creative Movement Camp: For children ages three to five. June 21-25, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Conservatory, 6199 Chebucto Rd., Halifax. 423-6995, maritimeconservatory.com.

Kids' Art and Cooking Camp: Instructors are Justine Kerr and Jura Peddle. Saturday and June 19; June 24-25 and June 28-July 2, 18 Spurr St., Mahone Bay. To pre-register, call 531-2008.

Marigold Cultural Centre Children's Camps: Musical Theatre Camp: June 24-26, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., for children ages nine-14 with a desire to sing, dance and act. 897-4004, **Strings n' Things:** July

12-16, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., for violin and cello students ages six and up. 650-2771, playcello.ca/stringsnthings; **Creative Kids Art Camp:** July 19-23, ages six-10; July 26-30, ages 11-15; Aug. 9-13, ages six-10; Aug. 16-20, ages 11-15. All classes from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Children will explore many different mediums including drawing, painting, jewelry making, more. 897-4004; **Summer Theatre Camp:** Aug. 16-20, ages 13-17; Aug. 23-27, ages nine-12. Classes are from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 897-4004. Marigold Cultural Centre, 605 Prince St., Truro. marigoldcentre.ca.

Pirate Family Fun Day: Water gun battle on the high seas (Halifax Harbour) aboard the *Mar II* and *Theodore Tugboat*. In support

of Make-A-Wish Foundation. Sunday, 9:30 a.m., Murphy's on the Water, 1751 Lower Water St., Halifax. Call to register 466-9474. **St. Luke's Vacation Bible School 2010:** July 5-9, 9 a.m.-noon, for children ages four to twelve. Registration required before June 20. St. Luke's United Church, 5374 St. Margarets Bay Rd., Upper Tantallon. 826-9270, ajmaclean@eastlink.ca.

Sing Summer Camps: Three camps available this year. Junior Choir Camp, eight-13 years; Youth Choir Camp, 13-18 years; Adult Choir Camp, 18 years and up. Camp will take place in August at the United Church Campgrounds, Berwick. For information, 423-4688, nscf.ns.ca.