



The Gatlin Brothers to kick-off Christmas tour in Branson

By Tim Church
tchurch@bransontrilakesnews.com

Larry, Steve & Rudy: The Gatlin Brothers are returning to Branson on Saturday, Nov. 20, to launch their 2021 Country & Christmas Tour at The Mansion Theatre for the Performing Arts.

The Grammy-Award winning trio, who have been performing for more than six decades, will be kicking-off their Christmas tour with an 8 p.m. showtime on Saturday.

Rudy Gatlin, the self-titled tall, good looking brother, who stands on the right, sings the high harmony, plays rhythm guitar and holds it all together, said their Christmas tour will basically be what they've been doing for the last 41 years.

"We started doing Christmas shows in about 1980. Our agent in New York said, 'Hey, do y'all do Christmas songs?' We said, 'Well, good lord, yeah we know Christmas songs.' He said, 'Well I just booked us on some shows in December.' You see we used to stop in November. We stopped touring and that was pretty much the end of the season," Gatlin said. "We said, 'Sure' and he booked us in a couple of theaters and we would do our Country & Christmas show. So not all country and not all Christmas, but we'd do a Country & Christmas show and it worked out so good."

Gatlin said for the Christmas portion of the show, they enjoy performing the classics.



Courtesy of The Gatlin Brothers

Larry, Steve & Rudy: The Gatlin Brothers will be back in Branson at The Mansion Theatre on Saturday, Nov. 20.

"We'll do some country hits and then go into Christmas. We're kind of traditional. We like the ole traditional songs. I still like to hear 'White Christmas' Christmas song," Gatlin said. "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas. I still like to hear that. It just feels like Christmas when you hear 'White Christmas' and chestnuts roasting on an open fire. So that's what we're going to do."

As for the country section of the show, Gatlin said they have some of their biggest hits lined up to sing, as well as some of their misses.

"We'll do 'Houston' and 'Broken Lady' and even a couple songs that weren't hits. We'll throw in a couple of misses like 'Done Enough Dyin' and 'Help Me,'" Gatlin said. "Of course we'll do a little medley of 'I Just Wish You Were Someone I Loved' and 'I Don't Want to Cry.' 'Statues Without Hearts' and a bunch of others like that. We'll end with 'All the Gold' of course."

Gatlin added that they are looking forward to getting back to Branson.

"We love to come back there. Beautiful theatre, beautiful crowds, beautiful people that we work with and for. We love Larry Wilhite and the fine folks at The Mansion Theatre," Gatlin said. "It's good to come back there. I've got a lot of friends there. I don't know if we'll have time to see them all, but maybe we will. They'll drop by and we'll visit with them."

From Branson, The Gatlin Brothers will be making more than a dozen show stops as they take their Country & Christmas show across the country.

"We're doing some dates down in Florida. We're doing a date in Kansas...and a couple days later we're in St. Louis. We're at Bass Hall in Fort Worth, Texas," Gatlin said. "We are at the Franklin Theatre in Franklin south of Nashville. It's about seven minutes from the house, I love that one."

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Christmas at Dolly Parton's Stampede Everything you love about the dinner show with a holiday twist

By Tim Church
tchurch@bransontrilakesnews.com

Christmas at Dolly Parton's Stampede in Branson is well underway as the world's most visited dinner attraction is welcoming in guests to celebrate the spirit of the holidays.

For the 2021 Christmas season, the dinner show production has taken the best parts of its regular season show and Christmasized them, while also adding in some seasonal specific pieces too. While the regular Stampede show features a friendly rivalry between the North and South, Comedian Derik Zoo, who plays the role of Skeeter, shared what seasonal twists they have waiting for their guests.

"We have our friendly Christmas competition

between the North Pole and the South Pole, but you're also going to get to see amazing performances. We still have our three talented trick riders that we do in the main show, we have our roman ride of fire and those are obviously big staples of the place," Zoo said. "It's time for the holidays, so we have a spectacular toys segment of the show where our toys actually come to life and they'll do a big dance. They're all the old toys you'll see from when you were a kid like Army men, Raggedy Ann and Andy, teddy bears, a Jack-in-the-Box. Our Jack-in-the-Box, you've just got to see it to believe it. In my opinion

it's probably the coolest part of the whole show."

As Branson features an abundance of Christmas attractions and shows, Zoo said he believes their full-scale living Nativity scene, which features Mary, Joseph, the three wise men and of course baby Jesus, is one of the show features that sets them apart.

"We have live goats, sheep, camels, and donkeys. It really is just a spectacle and a sight to see. I don't know really of anywhere else in town where you're going to be able to see something that is specific with those animals and stuff," Zoo said. "I always tell people when you come to see the show, you definitely want to make sure you're there for the toys segment and the Na-

tivity scene, because it shows you the two different spectrums of Christmas, but it's cool how we were able to tie those together. It's a really neat thing, not only to get to see, but also to be a part of."

For Christmas at Dolly Parton's Stampede, guests will still receive the classic four-course feast, but with a Christmas twist. While enjoying the show, attendees will be treated to a creamy vegetable soup, a homemade biscuit, a whole rotisserie chicken, hickory-smoked barbecue pork loin, herb-basted potato, butternut corn on the cob, a special holiday dessert and unlimited Coca-Cola products, tea or coffee.

General Manager Bryan Cossiboom added the mixture of the show and



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As part of the first part of the show, guests are welcomed by the talented horse riders in the Christmas getups.

the feast is another reason folks choose to spend Christmas at Dolly's.

"We bring Santa Claus out for the kids to see. They always enjoy that. And we can't forget our four course holiday feast. That's what's always separating us from anybody else," Cossiboom said.

"Not only the world class entertainment we provide and the fact that we do a completely different show for Christmas, but we're very proud of the meal we serve every single night and I think that's something people love to come back for."

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Branson Illusionist to attempt world record buried alive escape

By Tim Church
tchurch@bransontrilakesnews.com



Courtesy of Phil Dalton

Branson Illusionist Phil Dalton to attempt world record buried alive escape at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 20.

After a rocky start, Branson Illusionist Phil Dalton has rescheduled his Buried Alive Escape to take place this Saturday, Nov. 20, at Branson's Haunted Screampark.

Originally scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 28, Dalton planned to be locked inside of a solid wood coffin and buried alive six feet into the earth on the grounds of the Branson Star Theater. However, on the day of the planned event, Dalton and his crew make an unexpected discovery after attempting to dig more than a half dozen different holes on the property.

"For those who didn't hear last Thursday I was scheduled to literally be buried alive and try to escape," Dalton said in a Facebook announcement. "Early that day we discovered (the hard way) that all the ground near our theater has a solid layer of rock roughly two feet beneath the surface."

Now, nearly a month later, Dalton will once again take to the earth to make his world record escape attempt at 5 p.m.

"A lot of the things we do, there's kind of an established method to do and buried alive is not one of those," Dalton said in an October

interview. "Right now I hold the record. I am the only person in the world to have done this twice and escaped, of course escape being the keyword there. It always goes much better if you're still alive to take the applause."

The buried alive escape on Saturday is free to spectators and will include a little audience participation.

"You're going to see a six foot hole dug in the ground. I'm going to be sealed, locked inside of a wooden coffin by a bunch of members from the audience. They're going to pick it up and lower it into the ground," Dalton said in October. "We're actually going to have audience members be the ones to lower the coffin down kind of old fashion style with ropes. They're going to lower me down six feet into the ground. I'm going to be covered with about nine tons of earth, of real earth, real dirt and we're going to see if I can make my escape."

In 2010 and then again in 2012 Dalton was buried alive and successfully escaped. The last time Dalton successfully completed the buried alive escape, he said it took around 19 minutes to finish. For

this attempt, he said he is thinking it should take around the same amount of time.

To prepare himself for the escape, Dalton said he uses the same motto they taught him when he began learning to be a skydiver.

"The rule we have in skydiving is, 'Think it through on the ground. Don't wait until you get up in the air to have to figure something out. Think everything through on the ground,'" Dalton said. "I've always believed there is a totally safe way to do anything as long as you think it through before you get somewhere dangerous. Anything can be done."

Showtimes Phil Dalton Theater of Illusion at the Branson Star Theater are at 10 a.m. Tuesdays through Fridays. The Branson Star Theater is located at 3750 W. 76 Country Boulevard in Branson.

To learn more about the escape and Dalton, visit the initial story 'Buried Alive: Branson illusionist to attempt record setting escape' at bransontrilakesnews.com.

For additional information search for the 'Phil Dalton Theatre of Illusion' page on Facebook or visit 50magicshows.com.