

Tuesday, September 22, 1992

## Life &amp; Times

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## Volunteer Jam finds one more performer

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Willie Nelson made a surprise appearance at the 15th Volunteer Jam, performing country classics with the show's organizer, Charlie Daniels.

The country and rock marathon Sunday raised \$15,500 for AIDS, leukemia and cancer research at Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville. About 30 acts performed at Starwood Amphitheater before about 10,000 people. Nelson and Daniels sang "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain," "Night Life" and other standards. Pee Wee King, 78, sang "Tennessee Waltz," which he co-wrote in 1948.



Nelson

## Secretary honored for Old West spirit



DENVER — Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, a former six-term congressman from Wyoming, has been named "Citizen of the West" for 1993.

Cheney will be honored Jan. 11 on the eve of the 87th National Western Stock Show and Rodeo in Denver. He is the 17th recipient of the award, begun in 1978 to honor modern-day pioneers who help preserve the heritage of the West.

## Former president puts no veto on jeans

SAN DIEGO — Gerald Ford's autographed jeans were worth \$105 to the Alzheimer's Association.

The former president was among more than 60 celebrities to pen denims for an auction Sunday.

Scott Finkley, an auction organizer, said jeans were also donated by actress Joan Van Ark, singers Amy Grant, Kathy Mattea and Randy Travis, and actor Scott Bakula.



Ford

## Breakup turns actor into basket case



NEW YORK — Actor Michael Pfeiffer said he's a "raw wound" from his breakup with Michelle Pfeiffer.

Pfeiffer called off their three-year, biocastal relationship last week that he and Pfeiffer, 34, had other problems.

## Our Telephones

Call Life & Times editor Carol Kriebel at 420-5225 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays; after hours call 420-5226. For weddings, engagements or anniversaries call 420-5229.

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## Murphy and the veep

TV's most famous single mother takes her shots at Quayle

By FRAZIER MOORE  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — A fictional single mother got in her licks at Vice President Dan Quayle on Monday night, when millions of Americans tuned in *Murphy Brown* to watch the sitcom that entered the national political debate.

It was Quayle, a first-time viewer Monday night, who shifted the national focus to *Murphy Brown* when he criticized the CBS series for its title character's decision to become a single parent.

"Some might argue that attacking my status as a single mother was nothing more than a cynical bit of election-year posturing," said Brown (Candice Ber-

gen), reacting in an editorial segment on *FYI*, the equally fictional news show. "I prefer to give the vice president the benefit of the doubt."

"These are difficult times for our country and in searching for the causes of our social ills we could choose to blame the media, or the Congress or an administration that's been in power for 12 years, or we could blame me."

She agreed with Quayle that a dialogue on family values was needed, but said that limiting the definition of a family to a mother, father and children "seems painfully unfair."

"Perhaps it's time for the vice president to expand his definition and recognize that whether by choice or circumstance, families come in all shapes

and sizes. And ultimately, what really defines a family is commitment, caring and love."

Then *Murphy Brown* introduced single-parent families.

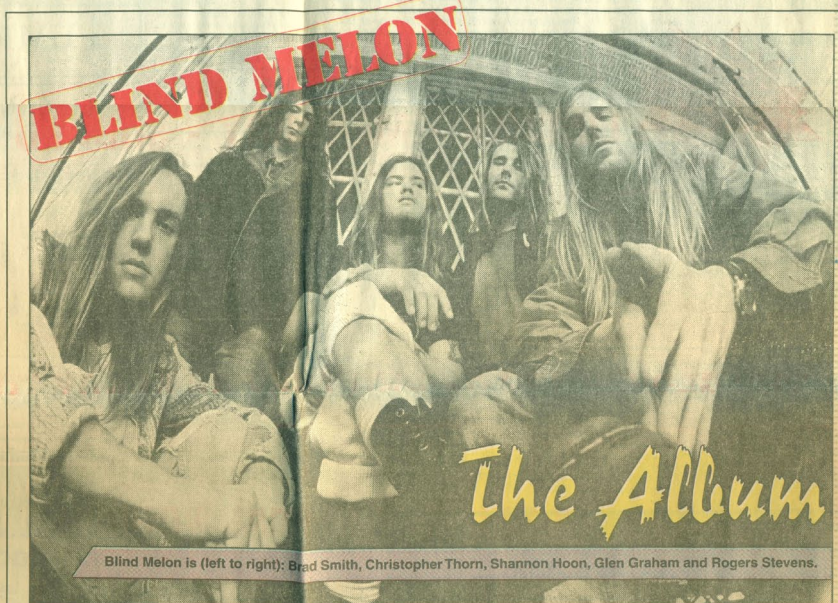
It was a moment of high seriousness for a sitcom about a Washington, D.C.-based TV reporter and her co-workers. The series had been a hit almost four years before its producers decided to let the unmarried Murphy become pregnant.

Quayle, in a May 19 address in San Francisco, blasted the *Murphy Brown* character for "mocking the importance of fathers by bearing a child alone, and calling it just another lifestyle choice."

Monday's hourlong season premiere was kept under wraps until airtime.



*Murphy Brown* star Candice Bergen in a scene with her new TV son during Monday night's season debut on CBS.



Blind Melon is (left to right): Brad Smith, Christopher Thorn, Shannon Hoon, Glen Graham and Rogers Stevens.

## Debut record worth its wait in gold

Anything worth having is worth waiting for.

And so it goes with *Blind Melon*, the finely textured self-titled debut from the band featuring Lafayette native Shannon Hoon.

It's been nearly two years since Hoon and his transplanted rural bandmates signed with Capitol Records in a flurry of industry hype and today's scheduled release of *Blind Melon*.

The "between time" has been filled with recording, moving from L.A. to North Carolina, and touring with Soundgarden and this spring's MTV 120 Minutes package tour.

The wait is justified with 13 songs of rock 'n' roll in earth tones that mark arguably the best debut of the year.

This is a loose, jam-filled effort of a young band in full control as it explores an uncontrollable field of coming of age.

Recorded in Seattle with producer Rich Parasher (Temple of the Dog, Pearl Jam), *Blind Melon* sends out many signals of where this band is heading.

A '70s southern sound pervades, yet doesn't pin it down.

*Blind Melon* is touched here by an Allan Brothers jamblivity ("Holy Man"), there by a Jane's Addiction moodiness ("Tones of Home") and over yonder by a Soundgarden or Seattle sound intensity ("Dear Ol' Dad").

## Record Review

*Blind Melon*  
Blind Melon  
(Capitol)

There's even the honey touch of early Rod Stewart solo work ("Change").

Rogers Stevens and Christopher Thorn's layered guitar work lay down a funky folkiness that rides the waves of Hoon's scratchy and personal singing.

Next to Hoon's performance, the yeoman's star performance is turned in by drummer Glen Graham, who blends deceptively simple rhythm and fills with Brad Smith's bass lines to give *Blind Melon* its loose feel.

Hoon writes lyrics that he brushes off as ambiguous, take-what-you-can flows of words that favor moods over direct storytelling.

At the same time, *Blind Melon*'s themes are unmistakable — growing up, getting lost and found, and coming to terms with your folks, your friends, your confused youth and yourself.

As good as it is, this is a record that leaves plenty of ground open for *Blind Melon*. Expect Hoon and *Blind Melon* to hit that ground running.

— Dave Bangert/Journal and Courier

## A mile-a-minute conversation with Shannon Hoon

Shannon Hoon is never short on things to say, even if he doesn't have much to say.

Just before his band, *Blind Melon*, released its major-label, self-titled debut, the McCutcheon High School graduate and mile-a-minute conversationalist was roaming Lafayette, catching the stock cars at the Benton County Speedway and patching up a few potholes in his life.

And, of course, talking a blue streak, psyched that *Blind Melon* was finally going to hit the stores today. It's been more than three years since he left Lafayette for Los Angeles and two years since he and his bandmates were signed to Capitol Records.

In a careening, veering interview, the 25-year-old singer that *Rolling Stone* said "at times sounds eerily like Janis Joplin" sounded off about his record, his life and his growing appreciation for his home town. Here's some of what he had to say about:

## The record

"It's a diverse album. I like the fact that we haven't pigeonholed

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Wednesday: Join the Outatenon Brigade on their journey to the Feast



# Hoon

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ourselves or we haven't built any kind of boundaries around ourselves that wouldn't permit us to be able to venture in any musical direction we choose to do. ...

"It really is a 100 percent band-oriented album. ... Without one person, it definitely would be an undecorated Christmas tree. We're all really happy with it."

## Hype and history

"It took a long time to get rid of the hype around the band. Hype is a very superficial wave that we didn't feel like riding. And it took a long time for us to get that stuff out of the way to where we could just concentrate on the record.

"I mean, we've been signed for almost two years and we haven't got the album out. ...

"We delayed it a long time because it took us a while to surround ourselves with people who would let us be the creative part of the project. But eventually we did that. We are surrounded with a lot of people who really believe in the things we want to do and are willing to let us do it."

## 'Blind Melon' favorites

"That's like asking me, if I was a parent, which kid I love the most. Each song definitely reflects on something I or the one of the other guys have had to deal with or something we've seen. I can't really state which song is my favorite, but as far as the whole thing, I'm 100 percent satisfied with it."

## The feel of the record

"There's lots of moods. Personally, I'm into mood music. ... For me personally, I like to hear a lot of ups and downs in the mood swings of an album because my life has had a lot of ups and downs and a lot of mood swings."

## Songwriting

- "Tones of Home" (the first single): "It's very ambiguous. It is a song that a lot of people can relate to. Obviously, everyone's had to deal with leaving the nest, taking what they grew up with and applying it to what they're moving to. Wherever your feet are planted doesn't mean your mind can't wander."

- "I Wonder," which ends with the line, *I only wanted to be 16*

and free: "Obviously, when you're at that age — 16, 17, 18, that's a very formative age, for me it was — and a lot of things a 16-, 17-, 18-year-old kid chooses to do doesn't always go part and parcel with what their parents expected them to be.

"And it's just something screamed into the mirror at yourself. Sometimes you're the only person that can understand where you're coming from. For instance, I'm the only person who could put up with me 24 hours a day. Even that's a little too much."

## Touring

"Nothing's ever confirmed until three or four hours before a tour starts. It's all up in the air. Obviously, we've been submitted for a lot of tours ...

"All I know is that every tour we've been on has skipped over Indiana completely. ... We drove through it. We drove down I-65 by HoJos out there, I don't know how many times, and just kind of waved to the city. And that's about it."

## Back in Lafayette

"I've been hanging around with the family. I've been filling in some potholes, so to speak, in

the family thing, communicating a lot with a lot of people in my family, which is something I kind of lost the last couple years I was home. ...

"You know what, man? I dig it in Lafayette. I didn't appreciate it until I left. I love coming back and seeing people who had parts and hands in on seeing me grow to believe in myself. There's quality people there."

## Fame and fortune

"Yeah, there are things that I thought would be better. ... But those things that I've been disappointed by, there's been two or three things that have come out that I had no idea would be so overwhelming. ...

"I've sat down and thought, 'All right, you know, there's a good chance it could sell.' If this happens, I'm prepared for it. If it doesn't, I'm also prepared for it. I'm not going to bank on it. I'm just sitting back. I'm going to be happy one way or another."

"My time that I went back and spent at home and hanging out with my family has been beautiful. That's a definition of success for me. That's a priority that's already been accomplished for me. ... That means more to me than any fame or fortune ever would."