



John Goodspeed: Classic sounds, any way you look at it

Web Posted: 10/18/2007 11:16 AM CDT

San Antonio Express-News

Take your pick — classic honky-tonk country or classic Southern-fried country rock.

You won't go wrong Friday night going with either the **Texas Sapphires**, celebrating a CD release at Texas Pride Barbecue, or the **Marshall Tucker Band**, celebrating 35 years of music.

Because the Texas Sapphires are not as well known, we'll get to them first.

The Austin quartet specializes in a lively, retro honky-tonk sound that blends classics such as **Buck Owens'** "Under Your Spell Again" and Marty Robbins' "Cigarettes and Coffee Blues" with originals such as "Barstow Barstool" and "Cold Silver Ring," both dripping with heartache.

Those are just four of the 19 — count 'em, 19 — songs on "Roadhouse Gems," released Tuesday on Stag Records. Recorded live at John T. Floore Country Store, "Gems" follows the band's studio debut, "Valley So Deep."

The live album reprises tunes from the studio CD, such as "The Emerald Outlaw," a melodic blend of bluegrass and country written by co-lead vocalists **Rebecca Lucille Cannon** and **Billy Brent Malkus**. They make the Sapphires sparkle, combining songwriting talents, swapping lead vocals and harmonizing on both high lonesome sounds and honky-tonk swaggers.

Their intensity was nurtured in their prior incarnations. Malkus, an erstwhile Chesapeake Bay hog farmer, left for Austin with his punk/metal band, **Mondo Generator**. He also sang and played guitar with **Nathan Hamilton & No Deal**. Cannon used to sing for Austin pop/punk rockers **Sincola**.

Malkus also plays guitar, Dobro and piano. The rest of the band is **Bobby Daniel**, bass, and **Bob Pearce**, banjo, mandolin, Dobro and steel guitar

Showtime is 7 p.m., and it's free as part of the weekly Friday Fish Fry at Texas Pride.

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