

THE ENTERTAINMENT ISSUE

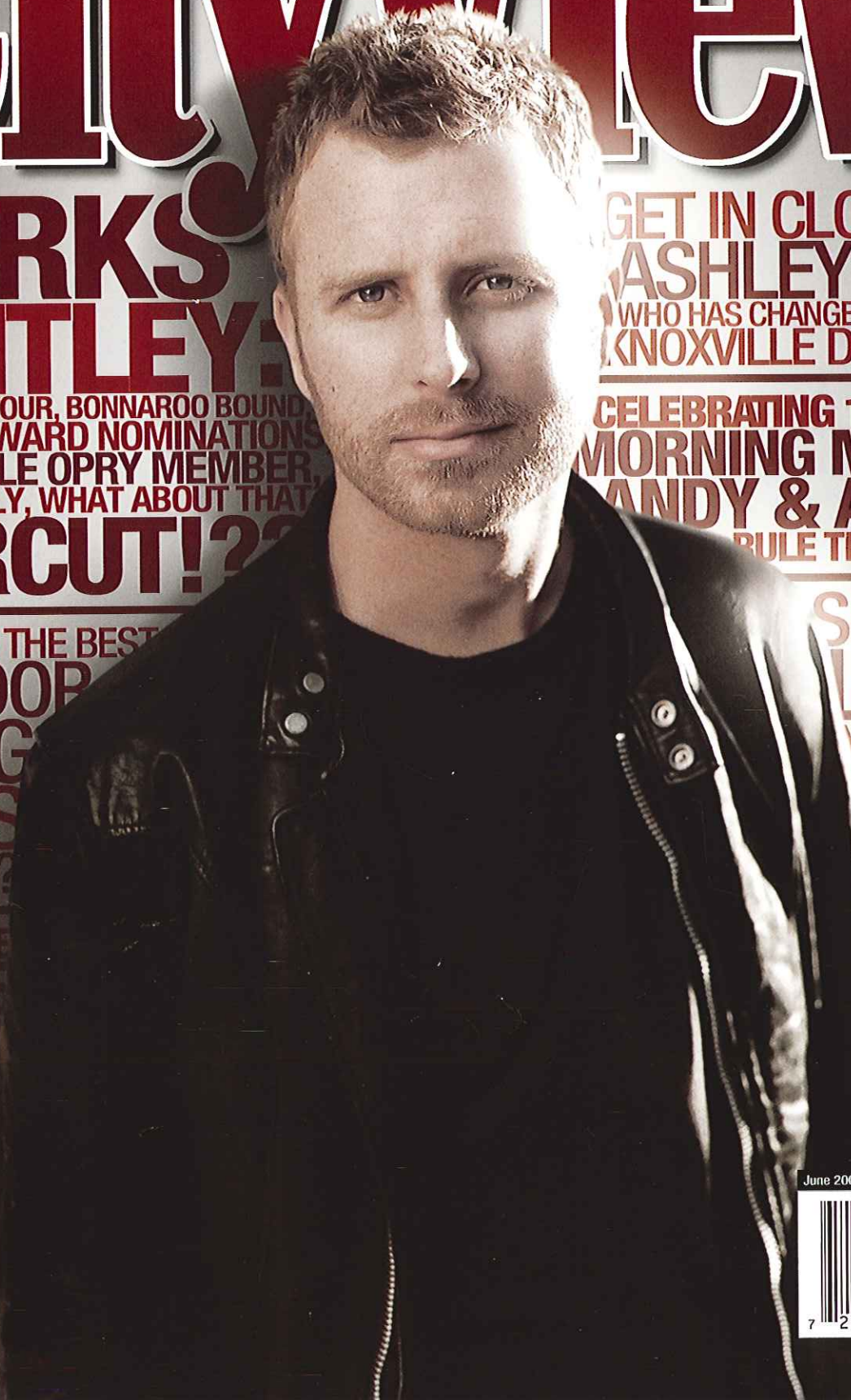
CityView Knoxville

DIERKS & BENTLEY

HEADLINING A TOUR, BONNAROO BOUND, MULTIPLE AWARD NOMINATIONS, A GRAND OLE OPRY MEMBER, BUT SERIOUSLY, WHAT ABOUT THAT HAIRCUT!??

WHERE ARE THE BEST OUTDOOR DINING SPOTS IN TOWN?

YOUR GUIDE TO THE DIETS WHICH ONES WORK WHICH ONES ARE BUSTS



GET IN CLOSE WITH ASHLEY CAPPS

WHO HAS CHANGED THE WAY THAT KNOXVILLE DOES MUSIC

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF MORNING MAYHEM: ANDY & ALLISON

RULE THE AIRWAVES

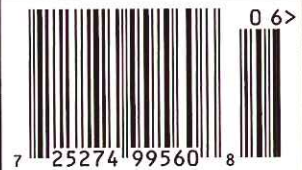
SUMMER LOVIN'

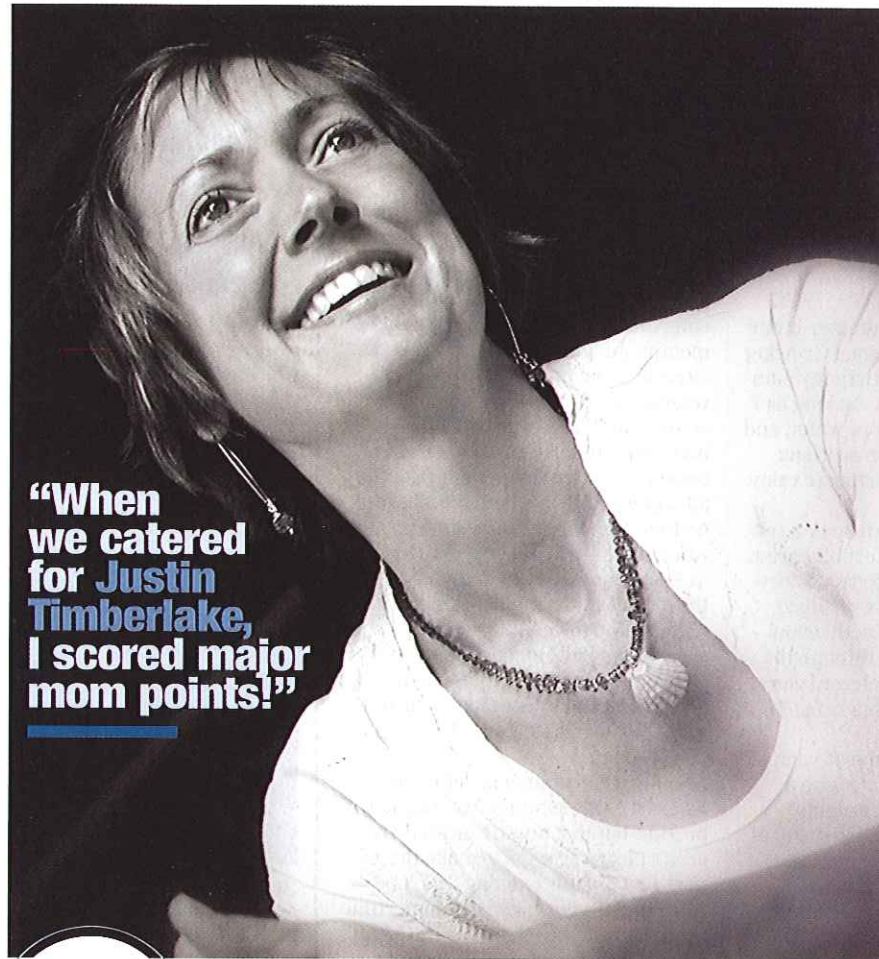
YOUR GUIDE TO DATING IN KNOXVILLE

OAK RIDGE:

WE VISIT THE SECRET CITY

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“When we catered for Justin Timberlake, I scored major mom points!”

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THE STAR-POWERED CATERER

Hollis Church and her dedicated team of professionals at Dega Catering have been feeding the cream of the crop in the entertainment industry for years. Neil Young, Dave Matthews, John Mayer, Prince, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill have all enjoyed Church's delicious meals on the road, and with her amazing reputation and dedicated staff, you can be sure her adventures in the entertainment biz will keep coming! **BY CAROLYN CORLEY**

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LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT COUNTRY MUSIC STAR DIERKS BENTLEY

People are talking about Dierks Bentley. He's the youngest current member of the Grand Ole Opry, been nominated for multiple awards (and won his share of 'em), headlining his own nationwide tour, and serving as the first headlining country music entertainer at this year's Bonnaroo. The hot topic these days, though, is that haircut. **REBECCA BOND** dives head-first into Bentley's world on page 46.

30 THE MUSIC MAN

AC Entertainment has become a force of nature in the music industry, especially for our city. When it comes to bringing in the big names and promoting the local greats, nobody does it better than Ashley Capps and his do-all entertainment company. Get in close with the man behind the curtain. **BY MICHAEL TRIBBLE**

36 THE DATING GAME

So you're running out of date ideas? Your significant other getting tired of those same old nights on the couch watching "The Andy Griffith Show" reruns? Our Knoxville Dating Guide can cure that problem. Whether it's to ease the first date jitters or to get that exciting spark back in your relationship, we've got you covered on page 36. **BY RUSSELL GRIMM**

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When it rains and floods, you can find a select group of thrill seekers pulling off some amazing feats. Plunging themselves down overflowing, creeks in the East Tennessee area, we're proud to introduce the creek boaters. **BY RUSSELL GRIMM**



34 YOUR GUIDE TO THE DIETS

With so many diets on the market today, it can be extremely difficult knowing which ones are the best, and which ones are a bust. Check out our handy guide and find out which one will help you meet your goals! **BY LEE MURPHY**

A1 Oak Ridge: The Secret City

Imagine living in a city completely shrouded in secrecy and mystery, where anyone over the age of 12 is required to wear a badge, and details of your life are forbidden to be told...for the safety of our nation. 60 years ago, this was a way of life in Oak Ridge. Now visit the secret city. **BY STACEY WISEMAN**

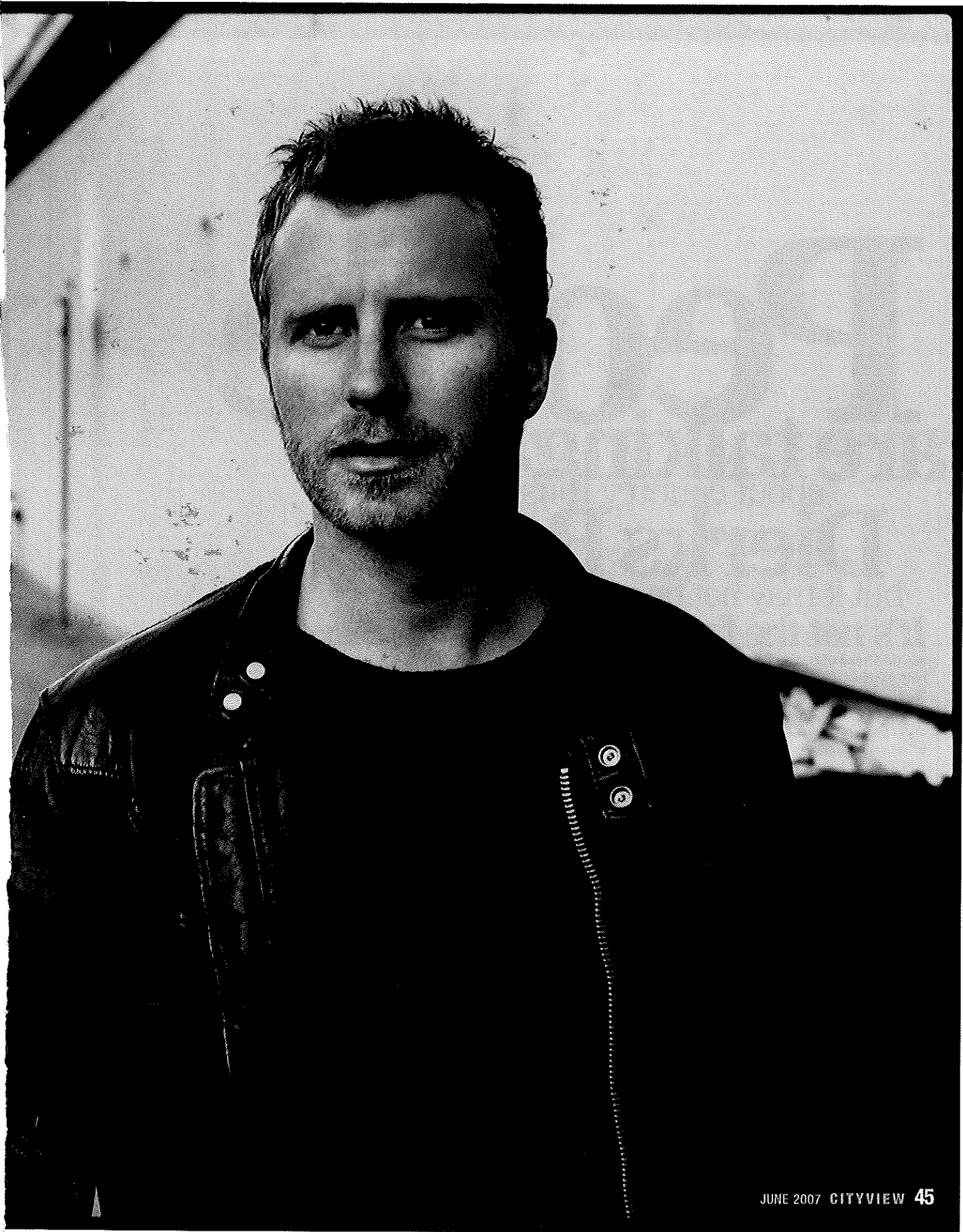
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT
DIERKS BENTLEY,
MAINLY ON THE SUBJECTS OF

HAIRCUTS,
HONKY TONKS
& HIS ALL-NEW

POLITICAL
APPOINTMENT

(COUNTRY MUSIC'S
AMBASSADOR
TO BONNAROO)

AS TOLD BY REBECCA BOND



People

are talking

about country music singer

Dierks Bentley,

but it may not be what you *think*.

It's not the fact

that his 2005 induction into the Grand Ole Opry makes him, at the age of 31, the youngest current member. And it's not his 2006 *Country Music Association Male Vocalist of the Year* nomination. He is also headlining his own tour, but it's not that either. *Dierks Bentley recently got a haircut*. "After that many years of having long hair, I was just ready for a haircut. So I cut it," he explains simply.

However, it's anything but simple. Known for his trademark golden curls, reminiscent of the 1980s-era "Greatest American Hero," Bentley recently opted for a shorter, styled 'do, creating a stir on the nightly news, internet message boards and amongst his fans. Foreseeing the impact this would likely have, Bentley's first impulse was to cut his hair on-stage during a concert. "I thought that would be really funny," he says. Bentley's video director for his new single, "Long Trip Alone," thought differently, convincing him to cut his hair as part of the video's storyline.

THAT ANYONE CARES whether his hair is long or short, curly or straight, is indicative of the rise to fame that Bentley has experienced in the past four years. Growing up in Phoenix, Arizona, Bentley first picked up an electric guitar at the age of 13, but he only took "a couple of lessons," instead relying on the tutelage of friends. When he was 17, he heard the Hank Williams, Jr. song, "Man to Man." According to Bentley, that moment shifted his perspective on playing music, causing him to switch to the rhythm guitar and begin writing songs. Bentley never took a voice lesson, claiming that his real voice lessons were to be had years later while paying five dollars on Tuesday nights to hear The Sideman play at Nashville's The Station Inn.

And how did he make his way to Nashville? Acceptance to Vanderbilt University, though admittedly, Bentley didn't spend a lot of time in class. "I spent most of my time down on Lower Broadway trying to

learn to play country music." Regardless of how he got there, Bentley knew that to make it, he had to be in Nashville. "There might be better singers or musicians across the country, but if you're not in Nashville, you won't be seen. It's like a lottery ticket: must be present to win. So, the way I got to Nashville was through school."

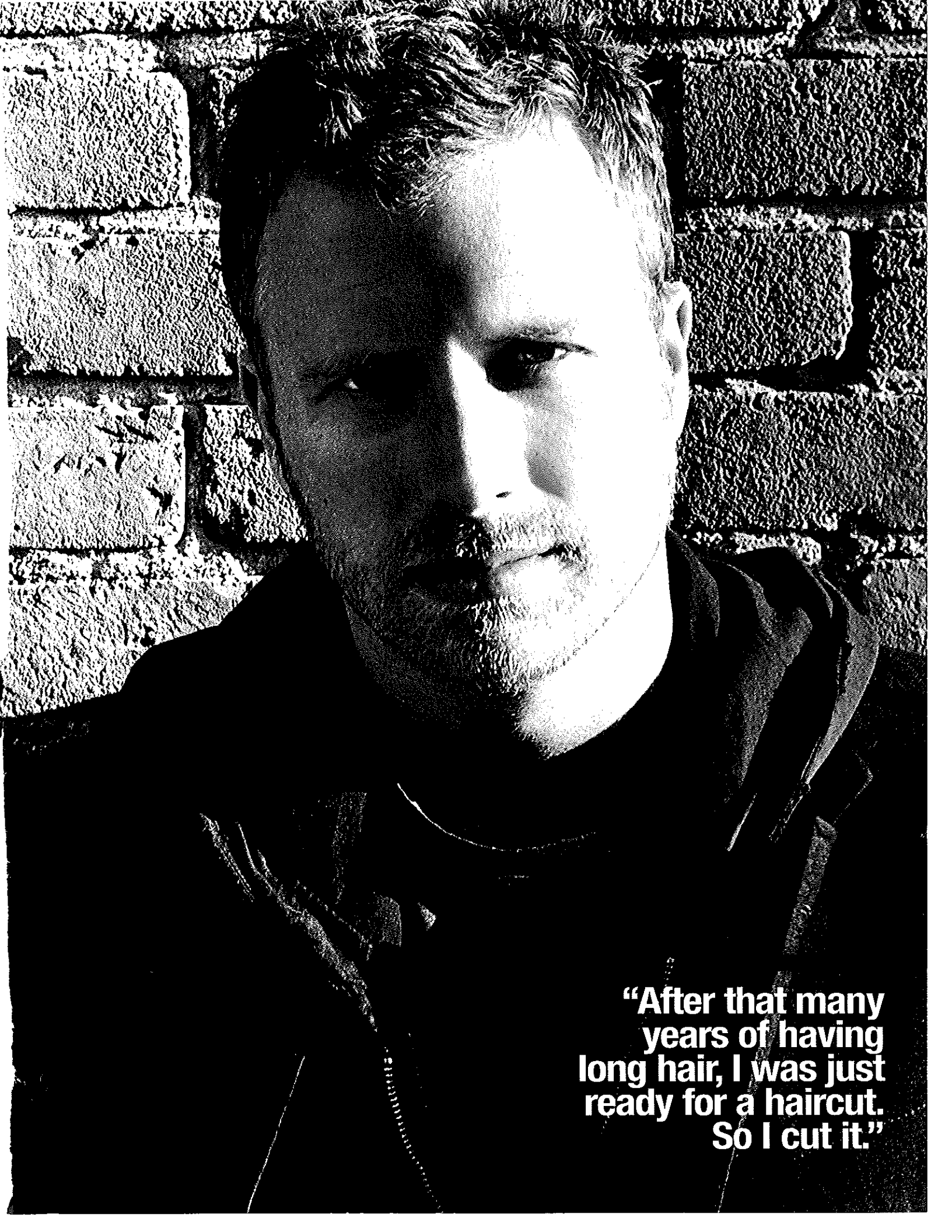
Bentley began his real education when he traded the academia of Vanderbilt's classrooms for the downtown Nashville country music scene. He took a job at *The Nashville Network* where he spent hours logging tape of historical country music performances from the 1940s

to the 1980s. Taking advantage of the opportunity to see the greats in action, Bentley filled notebooks with his observations of legends like Willie Nelson and Mel Tillis. He formed a band of his own and graduated from dive bars to playing the Station Inn himself. At one point, Bentley had a goal to play Nashville's legendary

"The only way to accomplish your goals is to make deadlines, especially if you are fearful of something."

Bluebird Café, where singer-songwriters are given the opportunity to present their original work, before his 23rd birthday in 1998. "The only way to accomplish your goals is to make deadlines," he says, "especially if you are fearful of something. For me, the only way I could get the nerve up to play The Bluebird was to set a goal." He met that goal, with a couple of weeks to spare.

In typical Bentley fashion, he eventually signed a record deal with Capitol Nashville, not through some big break but as a result of hard work and perseverance. After signing with Capitol, Bentley broke onto the country music scene in 2003 with the release of his self-titled debut album, which went platinum. His first single, "What Was I Thinkin'?", skyrocketed to number one on the country charts and remains one of



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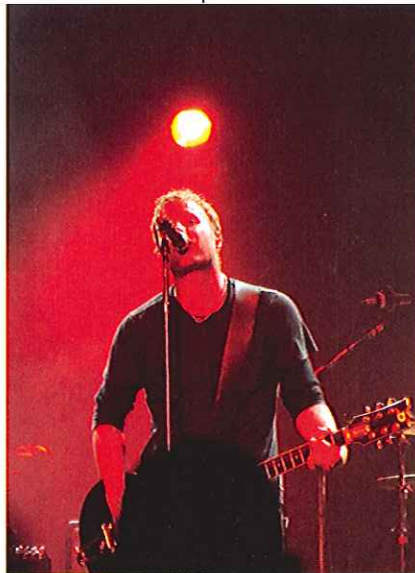
his signature songs today. In recognition of his newfound success, *Music Row* magazine named Bentley 2003 *Breakout Artist of the Year*, and *Billboard* and *R&R* magazines each named him *Top New Artist of the Year*.

In 2005, Bentley released his sophomore album, "Modern Day Drifter," which also went platinum and produced two number one songs, "Come a Little Closer" and "Settle for a Slow-down." But that was only the beginning of a huge year for Bentley. In addition to being inducted into the Grand Ole Opry, Bentley won the *Country Music Association's Horizon Award*, which honors the artist who has demonstrated the most significant creative growth and development in overall chart and sales activity, live performance, professionalism and critical media recognition. Bentley is in good company, as prior *Horizon Award* winners have included The Judds (1984) and Garth Brooks (1990). And much to the dismay of his female fans, Bentley topped off the year by marrying Cassidy Black, who he first met in the eighth grade.

"I have a good history with Knoxville. I started on the bottom rung and worked my way up."

THE YEAR 2006 found Bentley receiving a *Country Music Association Male Vocalist of the Year* nomination, releasing his third album, "Long Trip Alone," which produced the number one song, "Every Mile a Memory," as well as launching his own headlining tour. After being the opening act for George Strait and Kenny Chesney, headlining his own tour is "what the dream has been all along." He involves himself in all aspects of the tour, saying excitedly, "You get to pick the venues, the opening bands, the cities, the lighting, stage, sound, even the way the seating is set up—everything." Even while headlining, though, Bentley still loves the variety of playing different types of venues. "If we do arenas for too long, we'll stop and do a bar tour, playing nine bars in a row where we leave behind all the equipment and some of our crew and just go honky tonk it up." No matter where he's playing, Bentley stresses, "I love, love being on stage. I get a big charge out of it. That hasn't changed since I was in Nashville playing the small honky tonks, bars and clubs, just wanting to be on the road."

Bentley's love of touring has repeatedly brought him to Knoxville to perform. And while he's "definitely not a Vanderbilt fan," he says with a laugh, he's not a UT fan either. "This is probably worse than being a Vanderbilt fan," he jokes, "but my brother attends the University of Georgia, so I follow sports through him." Taking into account Bentley's success in Knoxville, however, no one seems to be holding it against him. "I have a good history with Knoxville," Bentley says. "I started on



the bottom rung and worked my way up."

His first Knoxville gig was in 2003, playing an acoustic set at Big Mama's Karaoke Café. Bentley followed that by playing a UT fraternity party and later, opening for George Strait's 2005 concert at Thompson-Boling Arena. Bentley's most recent return to Knoxville was in April for his headlining performance. On the morning of the concert, Bentley remarked that "this is my first time coming back to Knoxville and doing the headlining show. It's a reunion of sorts for us and a big deal to come back and do the real show after all the prior experiences I've had in Knoxville."

Another trip to the area is in the near future when Bentley will take the stage at this month's Bonnaroo. As the first mainstream country artist to ever play the festival, Bentley describes the opportunity as "amazing. The band and I are honored to have been asked. We always like to be the first, getting ourselves in situations where no one has ever been before, and taking country music to new places." While Bentley sees his foray into Bonnaroo as "providing a venue for country music to be heard and accepted," he is also interested to see how other genres of music are received. Not surprisingly, he is anxious to see performances by bluegrass pillars Gillian Welch and Ralph Stanley. But Bentley also can't wait to see Tool perform.

A country music singer excited to see Tool, a progressive rock band? Bentley himself describes his taste as "very random. I listen to all kinds of music." In his CD player you might find anything from Frank Sinatra to Cross Canadian Ragweed, or even a band called Johnny Ringo and the Red Sashes. Regardless, Bentley's country music influences run traditional, including George Strait, Hank Williams, Jr., Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings. He combines his varied music tastes into his own brand of country music. "I think when you listen to my records, you hear some thread that keeps it tied to Johnny Cash and Buck Owens, but through the songwriting you also hear something that is current and progressive." Bentley admits he doesn't know where exactly he fits in the country music spectrum, but "hopefully we have our own little niche."

Bentley also counts various bands as influences on his live performances. While touring, Bentley and the band watch concert DVDs on the bus, "drawing from everybody. Anyone that puts on a great live show is an influence on us, whether it be Pearl Jam or U2 for energy, or Merle Haggard for the subtlety of his style." While he may draw from others, Bentley has a performance style all his own, giving his fans his all onstage and striving to make a connection with each member of the audience. He likens performing to a spiritual experience. "It almost feels like being in church. All 5,000 or so people, including us in the band, are going through something together. It's about trying to break down that fourth wall between us and the crowd." His goal is for people to say that his band is "one of the best live bands of any genre of music," making it an event they want to see year after year. Bentley accomplishes this goal by "keeping the show spontaneous and open to possibilities."

During Bentley's recent performance at Knoxville's Civic Auditorium,

spontaneity could have been the theme of the night. The energy in the crowd was reminiscent of a warm Saturday in September at Neyland Stadium, as an excited fan walked through the aisles and started "the wave." Opening the show with "Every Mile a Memory," Bentley strode onstage dressed in black, sans the stereotypical cowboy hat, freshly shorn hair for all to see. The crowd went wild, replacing the omnipresent lighters of 1970s concerts with a sea of camera phones. Between songs, Bentley opened the onstage refrigerator filled with Bud Light longnecks and grabbed a beer.

As Bentley and the band picked up steam, fans sang louder and Bentley utilized the entire stage, making good on his promise to connect with the audience by frequently bending down to "the pit" to shake hands. At one point, Bentley jumped off the stage and into the crowd, running to the back of the Auditorium to sing to a group of girls, even allowing a male fan to reach over and tousle his short hair. After returning to stage, Bentley pulled a girl out of the pit and, à la Bruce

Springsteen, danced with her until segueing into his signature song "What Was I Thinkin'?" As Dierks left the stage, fans screamed for more. Show openers Jason Aldean and Miranda Lambert soon joined Bentley and his band for the final encore song, a rendition of Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues." This outstanding performance from start to finish is classic Bentley and he's on the road 300 days a year. Does it get tiring? In a word, "no."

As Bentley plows his way through 2007, he appears to have it all. He continues on his headlining tour with no signs of stopping. He has a hit album and continues to garner accolades for his accomplishments. He has made a home in Nashville with Cassidy and their two dogs. But what about that haircut? Despite being more successful than he was one year ago, he is suddenly less recognizable. "I walk through airports and no one has any idea who I am. I remain incognito, and it's actually been really nice." Dierks, with your degree of success, don't expect this anonymity to last much longer. ☞

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN MASTRO / PROVIDED BY BIG HASSEL MEDIA



IT'S BONNAROO TIME:

Knoxville Bands, Tennessee Locale, World-Class Style

Rolling Stone has revered it as "the American rock festival to end all festivals" and "one of the top 50 moments that changed the history of rock and roll." It has received "Festival of the Year" awards by *Pollstar*, *Spin* and *Billboard*. *USA Today*, *CNN* and *The New York Times* have showered it with accolades.

But you don't have to fly to Chicago or Austin for this event. The Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival is right in Knoxville's own backyard. Bonnaroo is a four-day music and camping festival held each June on a 700-acre farm in Manchester, Tennessee. Named after the Cajun slang word meaning "a really good time," Bonnaroo has lived up to its name for hundreds of thousands of music fans since its inception.

Knoxville's AC Entertainment and New York City's Superfly Productions joined forces to create Bonnaroo, hosting the first event in 2002. The organizers soon realized that traditional avenues of advertising were unnecessary as simple word of mouth throughout the music fan community led to a sellout of the 70,000 tickets in advance of the first festival. While 2002's Bonnaroo thrilled attendees with performances by Trey Anastasio, Widespread Panic, Galactic, Jack Johnson and Norah Jones, among others, each Bonnaroo since has proven in-

creasingly impressive. Over the six years of the festival, Bonnaroo has secured such acts as James Brown, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, Radiohead, Beck, Dave Matthews Band, The Black Crowes and The Dead. While adding to the quality of performances, AC Entertainment and Superfly Productions have also made strides to boost the Bonnaroo fan experience, culminating in a purchase of 530 of the Bonnaroo site's 700 acres this past January. With this purchase, their plan to improve Bonnaroo will be further implemented over the next several years, also possibly paving the way for multiple events to be held on the site.

Bonnaroo's main feature is certainly live music, ranging from rock to folk to reggae to jazz and everything in between. But even non-music lovers are entertained by the diverse attractions scattered throughout the festival. Craftsmen and artisans sell unique crafts, food, drinks and other merchandise. Bonnaroo's 100-acre entertainment village, Centeroo, offers an arcade, cinema, comedy club, silent disco, theater performers, beer festival, music technology village, yoga classes, kids area, playground and artist workshops.

This year's sixth annual Bonnaroo will be held Thursday, June 14th through Sunday, June 17th and features one of the most diverse lineups to date. In addition to showcasing its first mainstream country music singer, Dierks Bentley, Bonnaroo 2007 hosts The Police as part of their reunion tour. Headliners also include Tool, Widespread Panic and The White Stripes. Ben Harper and the Innocent Criminals, The Flaming Lips, The String Cheese Incident, Damien Rice, Gov't Mule, Ziggy Marley and Old Crow Medicine Show, among many others, will also be performing. Bonnaroo 2007 has a large Knoxville connection as several local bands, including Angel and the Love Mongers, Christabel and the Jons, Dixie Dirt, Jescoe, Brandy Robinson, Smokin' Dave and the Pre-mo Dopes, Tenderhooks and Westside Daredevils, will take to the café stages during the festival.

Tickets are still available for Bonnaroo 2007 and may be purchased at www.bonnarootickets.com. ☞