



Cracker Barrel Old Country Store Taps Artists & Songwriters Shane McAnally, Jennifer Nettles and CeCe Winans to Help #CareItForward This Summer

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New initiative aims to inspire employees, guests, communities across the country to care for one another

LEBANON, Tenn., June 22, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Cracker Barrel Old Country Store® today launches its new *Care It Forward* initiative to amplify care and connection as the country emerges from a year of social isolation. Rooted in the company's history of caring for employees and guests like family, the effort aims to both demonstrate and inspire acts of care.

Cracker Barrel will lead by example with both small and large acts of care, ranging from in-store surprises for guests throughout the summer to a special musical content series featuring pairings of musical artists from diverse backgrounds, genres and viewpoints. Cracker Barrel has paired GRAMMY Award-winning musicians and songwriters Shane McAnally, Jennifer Nettles and CeCe Winans with aspiring artists to help coach, mentor and support them in the next steps of their careers after a year where nearly two-thirds of artists and creative workers surveyed by Americans for the Arts reported being fully unemployed because of COVID-19. Cracker Barrel is encouraging fans to use #CareItForward on social media to share their own acts of care and keep the positive momentum going.

"As we emerge from a season unlike any we've ever experienced as a country, it's important to come together and demonstrate care – not only through conversations but also through actions," Cracker Barrel Senior Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer Jennifer Tate said. "Care is not a new concept at Cracker Barrel; we like to think of care as our secret ingredient and it has now become our rallying cry. At Cracker Barrel, we believe inspiring care can start by simply inviting a diverse range of people to participate, and you will see that in action with the launch of our *Care It Forward* initiative."

MUSICIANS MENTOR RISING STARS

The hardship of 2020 has left many musicians questioning if they will be able to continue chasing their dreams – with #CareItForward, Cracker Barrel is facilitating transformative moments of genuine care for several musicians, and ideally inspiring others.

Cracker Barrel is proud to partner with McAnally, Nettles and Winans to share stories of how their careers benefitted from someone making an effort to #CareItForward on their behalf, and to give these artists and songwriters the opportunity to do the same by mentoring up-and-coming musicians. As part of Cracker Barrel's ongoing commitment to creating inclusive content, renowned director and producer Whitney Clinkscales directed the #CareItForward series, which features the following pairings:

- Shane McAnally and Kylie Morgan
- Jennifer Nettles and Special Guest
- CeCe Winans and Tauren Wells

These artists will come together for engaging conversations touching on their struggles and triumphs in the music business, which will be highlighted in a compelling content series available at crackerbarrel.com/careitforward and via Cracker Barrel social channels. The first episode in the series, featuring GRAMMY Award-winning Winans and up-and-comer Wells, honors Black Music Appreciation Month and will be available Thursday, June 24, on Facebook, Instagram TV and YouTube. Winans and Wells cover Bill Withers' "Lean on Me." Additional content in the series will be released throughout the summer.

GUESTS RECEIVE SUNRISE SURPRISE NATIONWIDE

Cracker Barrel led by example early this morning when the company surprised hundreds of guests with free gift cards, totaling more than \$30,000 nationwide. Unsuspecting guests were given two \$25 gift cards; one allowing Cracker Barrel to "take care of" their meal or store purchase, and a second for the guest to #CareItForward by giving a gift card to another guest, employee or someone in the community in need of a little extra care. This is the first of several ways the brand will exemplify care for its guests throughout the campaign.

"Care is at the heart of everything we do to make the guest experience unique at Cracker Barrel – from our warm hospitality to our made-from-scratch cooking to our carefully curated retail offerings," Tate continued. "No matter what the world is facing outside, everyone can find care inside at Cracker Barrel. We hope the small gesture of care demonstrated this morning inspires our guests to care it forward and then share their positive stories."

Cracker Barrel guests, employees and community members who show care for one another are invited to share their stories and inspire others by using #CareItForward on social media. To learn more about how the Cracker Barrel family is showing care, visit crackerbarrel.com/careitforward.

About Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.

Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc. (Nasdaq: CBRL) provides a caring and friendly home-away-from-home experience while offering guests quality homestyle food to enjoy in-store or to-go and unique shopping – all at a fair price. Established in 1969 in Lebanon, Tenn., Cracker Barrel and its affiliates operate more than 660 company-owned Cracker Barrel Old Country Store® locations in 45 states and own the breakfast and lunch focused fast-casual Maple Street Biscuit Company® restaurants. For more information about the company, visit crackerbarrel.com.

About Shane McAnally

Shane McAnally is well established as one of the top songwriters in Nashville with over 40 No. 1 songs and three GRAMMY awards under his belt, but he sure isn't one to rest on his laurels. After founding a music publishing company, relaunching an iconic record label, and creating an acclaimed

stage musical, now McAnally has expanded his reach to television as a coach on NBC's *Songland*, a role that he describes as "my wildest dream job that I never knew I wanted."

Throughout his career, McAnally has won dozens of awards and accolades including three GRAMMY Awards (out of 11 nominations), three ACM awards (21 nominations), and a CMA award (12 nominations). McAnally is also the CEO of the publishing, management, and artist development company SMACKSongs, which he founded in 2012.

About Kylie Morgan

Kylie Morgan began writing songs at the age of 12 and gained national attention from music producers and television executives after releasing her music independently. This early success led Morgan to begin making regular trips to Nashville, crafting her voice and polishing her songwriting. When she turned 19, she made the decision to call Music City home. An avid yoga enthusiast, Kylie has earned her official Yoga Alliance Certification and participates in yoga daily. While stuck at home and unable to tour, Kylie created the **#namasteathome** series where fans can participate in [short yoga flows/light workouts](#). Morgan was previously selected as one of three artists for the CMA KixStart program and was named as one of VEVO's 2021 DSCVR Artists to Watch. The only country artist to make the list, the program highlights 19 of the world's top emerging artists poised to break out over the next year. Morgan co-wrote six of the songs on her recently released debut EP *Love, Kylie*, which was produced by Shane McAnally and Ben Johnson.

About Jennifer Nettles

Jennifer Nettles is a superstar entertainer on multiple platforms who will soon expand her musical versatility with a much-anticipated genre defying new album of American Songbook classics, titled "Always Like New," out June 25. She most recently appeared as a judge on TBS' mega-hit competition series, "Go-Big Show." Nettles portrayed "Aimee-Leigh Gemstone" on HBO's hit series "The Righteous Gemstones" and delivered a powerful and provocative performance in Focus Features' Harriet Tubman biopic. In 2019, Jennifer released an EP titled "I Can Do Hard Things." Previously, she released two solo albums titled "Playing with Fire" and "To Celebrate Christmas," as well as a Sugarland album named "Bigger." Sugarland's song "Stay" was a platinum No. 1 hit which earned two GRAMMY® Awards for "Best Country Song" and "Best Country Performance by a Duo or Group," and Jennifer earned another GRAMMY for her collaboration with Bon Jovi on "Who Says You Can't Go Home." Her other achievements in music include five ASCAP awards, three ACM Awards, a CMA Award, the Human Rights Campaign's Ally for Equality Award and the Artist Impact Award from Lincoln Center. Jennifer made her Broadway debut in 2015 as "Roxy Hart" in the Tony® Award-winning, record-breaking musical Chicago and starred as "Donna" in the Hollywood Bowl's summer production of Mamma Mia!. She is also currently developing a musical about 17th Century Crusading Poisoner Giulia Tofana.

About Tauren Wells

Tauren Wells is an eight-time GRAMMY® nominated artist, six-time GMA Dove award-winner, platinum-selling, singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, entrepreneur, as well as a public speaker. With 2M monthly listeners on Spotify, 780 million total solo career global streams with over 2.4 billion audience impressions in the US, Tauren has established himself as one of the most talented and exciting young artists in the music industry today. Known for tracks like the Platinum-selling hit "Hills and Valleys," as well as the Gold-certified "Known," the six-time No. 1 hitmaker released his second full-length album *Citizen of Heaven* in January 2020. He has collaborated with GRAMMY & Oscar winner H.E.R., country artists Jimmie Allen and Gary LeVox, Gospel music's Kirk Franklin and pop singer/songwriter Emily Weisband.

About CeCe Winans

The best-selling and most-awarded female gospel artist of all time, CeCe Winans has long since cemented her status as one of the most accomplished and celebrated women in modern music history. She has released a myriad of solo and collaborative albums that crossed genres and influenced generations of gospel and secular vocalists. Her mantel today holds a staggering 12 Grammy Awards, 23 Dove Awards and 15 Stellar Awards. Staggering accolades include being inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame, and receiving stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and Nashville Music City Walk of Fame. In addition to being named a Trailblazer of Soul by BMI and garnering multiple NAACP Image Awards, Soul Train Awards and ESSENCE Awards, this music pioneer continues to break through barriers. She has sold 17 million records world-wide, topping the gospel charts repeatedly while managing to cross over with smashes like "Count On Me," her stunning duet with Whitney Houston, which sold two million copies and cracked the Top 10 on the Pop, R&B, and Adult Contemporary charts. She touched millions more with inspirational performances everywhere from singing before the Pope to The White House. With her newest album "Believe For It," Winans is adding her first ever live album to her meteoric and expansive catalogue.

Cracker Barrel Media Relations:

615-235-4135

media.relations@crackerbarel.com



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