

Country Music and 'The Voice' Star Billy Gilman Coming to The Sharon

Billy Gilman shot to stardom twice during his musical career and is performing Friday in The Villages.

By **MICHAEL FORTUNA**
Daily Sun Staff Writer

THE VILLAGES

Billy Gilman wanted to reinvent his music career. Becoming a contestant on "The Voice" set him on that path.

More than a decade ago, a then-11-year-old Gilman had a few hits on the country charts in the early 2000s, including "One Voice" and "Oklahoma." He became the youngest performer to reach the Billboard country charts.

He stepped out of the spotlight when his voice changed. He also wanted to try his hand at singing pop songs.

"You gotta look at the facts," Gilman said. "I was 11 years old. You don't know who you are (at that age). I knew that 'The Voice' was an amazing opportunity to say I was alive and well."

That opportunity turned into becoming the runner-up on last year's season of "The Voice," which wrapped up in December. He is now out on the road to continue the momentum.

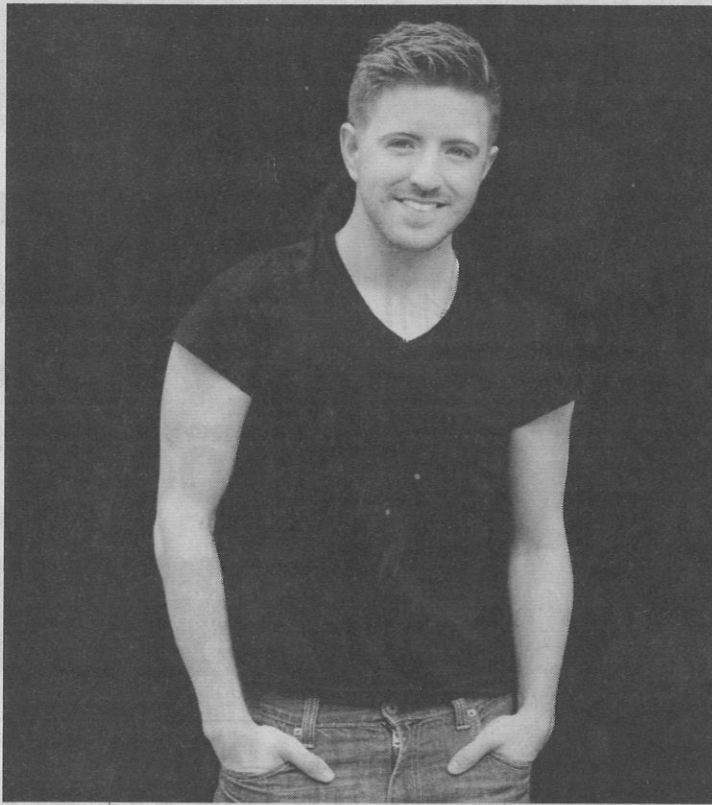
He will make a stop in The Villages to perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center. The show is in support of the Orange Blossom Gardens Lions Club.

Expect to hear a variety of songs, including tunes Gilman sang while on "The Voice," a few new songs, and a variation of "Carpool Karaoke" involving the audience.

"It really lets the people that maybe knew of me before, when I was a child of country music, that it fits a wide (area) of music," Gilman said.

His management team wanted him to audition for "The Voice" on three different occasions.

"Every time they brought it up, I would say, 'No,'" Gilman said. "This season, my manager said, 'The Voice' called and they think your story is inspiring, that it shows you're not giving up.' I thought, 'Why does this keep coming up?' So I jumped



Submitted Photo

Vocalist Billy Gilman, a runner-up on "The Voice," will perform Friday at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

on not screwing up."

The other judges, Miley Cyrus, Alicia Keys and Blake Shelton, joined Levine in hoping to add Gilman to their respective teams.

Keys and Shelton held out until near the end to turn around, so Gilman decided to make his final note more powerful than he had rehearsed it.

"(One of the producers told me afterward,) 'You weren't going to take no for an answer,'" Gilman said.

Gilman ended up joining

Levine's team.

During his time on the show, Gilman never backed down when it came to a song choice. He wanted to sing Celine Dion's "I Surrender" one week, but Levine wanted him to try Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides, Now."

"I was like, 'Adam, I'm a belter,'" Gilman said. "I can't go back to do a calm song.' (After) much fighting, he let me do my thing. That was the only song that went to No. 1 on iTunes."

For the finale, Levine wanted Gilman to sing the Frank Sinatra hit, "My Way." Gilman

BILLY GILMAN

Billy Gilman will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center, 1051 Main St. Tickets are \$65 to \$85 and are available at any Villages Box Office location or online at thesharon.com.

wanted another tune, but he relented, starting out the song singing it a cappella.

"That song has followed me," Gilman said. "People scream for it in concert. I couldn't get over how powerful it was for people. It's a pretty cool moment for me to be dead wrong."

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For his blind audition, Gilman sang Adele's "When We Were Young." Adam Levine turned his judge's chair around first.

"(The chair) spins around and lights up, but there's no sound," Gilman said. "If I got one chair, the nerves would go away and I could concentrate