



MEDIA ALERT-

COUNTRY LEGEND MERLE HAGGARD TO PERFORM AT WILDHORSE ON MAY 1

PENDLETON, OR- Country music legend Merle Haggard will appear at Wildhorse Resort and Casino on Saturday, May 1st at 3:00pm in the Rivers Events Center. Tickets go on sale April 5th.

Merle Haggard is a musical icon, not just in the country genre, but in American music as a whole. With forty #1 hits, heaps of Top Ten songs, winning just about every music award possible, both as a performer and songwriter, and being inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame, Haggard's work easily makes him one of the most influential artists of our time.

Known as "the poet of the common man," there is truth in the stories he tells through simple lyrics and exceptionally listenable music. Haggard studies and observes every detail of life around him, and relays what he sees and feels through his songs. With titles like "Okie from Muskogee," "Mama Tried," "Poncho and Lefty," and "Big City," Haggard has sang his way into the hearts of listeners world wide.

It hasn't been an easy road to stardom. When Haggard was just nine years old, the death of his father became a catalyst that led to a troubled youth. As a teenager, Haggard worked as short order cook when he wasn't locked in local jails for crimes ranging from burglary to auto theft and even escape. By the age of 21, Haggard was serving time in the notorious San Quentin Penitentiary after trying to burglarize a tavern. After 3 years and a stint in solitary confinement, for making home brew, Haggard finally changed his ways. Paroled in 1960, Haggard started focusing on his music.

Though he made his stage debut at just 15, it wasn't until 1963 that Haggard eventually broke into the Top 20 Billboard Charts with "Sing a Sad Song." Since then, the charts have been his second home. In 1968, Haggard had the biggest break of his career when he released the album, "The Legend of Bonnie and Clyde" which was home to one of the most important and lucrative songs of his career, "Today I Started Loving You Again." What started as a "B side" filler song has now been recorded by over 400 artists to date and is one of three Haggard songs to have logged over one million radio plays.

Haggard has released 65 albums and been nominated 42 times for Country Music Awards (CMA's); more than any other male entertainer. He has received 8 Grammy nominations and 56 of his songs have received Broadcast Media Inc. awards (BMI Awards). Haggard has performed for both President Nixon and Regan and his music was part of the Apollo 16 mission to the moon, via a custom recording, specially requested by the crew.

The Wildhorse show is the latest stop on the journey of his historic career. Tickets go on sale April 5th and are \$35 for general admission or \$50 for preferred seating. Tickets can be purchased at the Wildhorse Resort and Casino Gift Shop, at www.wildhorseresort.com or by calling Box Office Tickets at 800-494-TIXS. Must be 21 years of age.

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Wildhorse Resort & Casino is the Pacific Northwest's highest paying casino, with a record \$9.1 million slot jackpot. The Resort includes a 24-hour casino, hotel, RV Park, 5 restaurants, a sports bar, 18-hole golf course and Tribal museum. It is located just minutes off I-84 at Exit 216, four miles east of Pendleton. For more information: 1-800-654-9453 or www.wildhorseresort.com. Wildhorse is owned and operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.