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MAY-JUNE
ISSUE 81

American Century *Championship*



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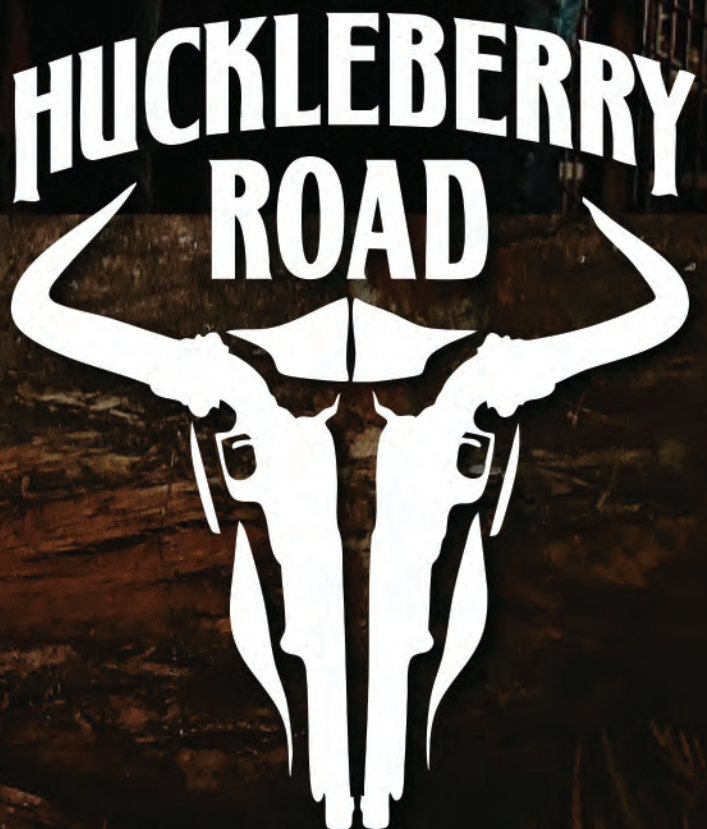


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By Melody Ann Minx

The oldest discovered musical instrument dates back 40,000 years. So, humans have been connecting through and regaling each other with music for a long time. If I were a betting gal, I'd say we've been singing for as long as we could speak and keeping a beat probably since we noticed whacking a log with a stick sounds pretty cool.

Music was about community then and it's about community now. Local music scenes everywhere help shape a city's cultural fabric. It's vital to a community's ecosystem. Live local music has been called the new church. The Biggest Little City's scene is a bubbling, melting pot of great jazz, indie, metal, country, etc. Loud and proud.





Speaking of, local and self-proclaimed, “unapologetically loud country” band, Huckleberry Road, has been making some noise locally and nationally. They like to call their sound Rock n Roll in a cowboy hat. And they’re hoping to help Reno become a musical destination. “We want to play loud and in our cowboy boots,” mused Anthony Vairetta, guitarist for the band. “We’ve played all over, from huge festival stages to little dive bars, but it boils down to local. Our music was born and bred here. We love touring, but we want to put Reno on the map.”

The Truckee Meadows seems to be headed in the right direction. “The talent pool has grown exponentially, especially from UNR,” Vairetta said. “There’s several that we’re just amazed by. It’s great to see so many musicians getting to those higher levels of writing, timing and musicianship.” Helping with that, venues are growing the songwriting scene with more writing rounds. “Storytelling is so important to music and our sound.



Anybody can write about trucks and girls and tailgates,” he stated. “We want substance behind our music. Over the years, we been digging into songwriting, storytelling, finding our own style and honing our craft.” Bubble-gum country this is not. One tune, Gasoline, is about one of their family members getting some fiery revenge with a rag in a car gas tank.”

"We discovered how much more fun it is to write about and tell stories," Varietta said. And they're bringing that to these cooperative songwriting rounds. "It's really great seeing the local community working together, learning from each other," he continued. "There's more collaborating, supporting each other." Even concerning shows. "Reno is more of a night-of town, but there's starting to be more presale attendance from bands."



Venues have a ton to do with it. Intimate spots allow for more community expression and can be vibrant cultural spaces. In the last few years, more have sprouted or reopened. "The live scene has grown so much due to venues like some of our favorites, Cypress and The Alpine," remarked Vairetta. "The Coyote Saloon, Brewery Arts Center, Club Underground, Pure Country and Nashville Social Club, etc, they're building the scene."



So are festivals like Artown, Western Lights, Drifters and of course NITC." Your next favorite artist might be playing just down the street. "There's more opportunities for those climbing the rungs because of the venue and festival growth," Vairetta said. "The rounds, the open mic nights; so much opportunity to hone their craft, hone their act. There's lots of artists here that have the potential to make it." Including themselves.

Huckleberry Road has opened for some big names – Hinder, Tyler Hubbard from Florida Georgia Line and played the likes of Night In The Country. And they're grateful for all of it. "We're very thankful. And all about connecting with people and leaving a good impression, on stage and off," Vairetta explained. "Professional relationships can make or break you. Attitude and work ethic are everything."





The band played a wedding and met attendees who happened to make up the band Hinder. A year or so later, they opened for them. "We strive to be positive and personable. It's what you put in. Put in the work."



Speaking of, they're getting set to go back on the road and put in that work. "We're ready. For those 45 minutes to an hour that we're on stage, that's when we really come alive," Vairetta stated. "We are artists AND performers. We love playing live and strive to give the best show humanly possible." And that could mean anything. "We're goofballs who like to play guitar loud," he concluded. "And we want our energy to reach the back of the room."



Bigger bands and bigger cities can coast on their musical laurels. But the smaller ones, the Biggest Little ones, they've gotta work for it. Huckleberry Road and Reno have a lot in common. Their talent exceeds their fame. For now.

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American Century *Championship*

The American Century Championship Returns for its 36th Year

by Bill Kopp

The American Century Championship is an annual celebrity golf tournament held each July at Edgewood Tahoe Resort in Stateline, Nevada. Established in 1990, it features a diverse field of celebrities, including athletes, actors and entertainers. The most recent winners were Tony Romo (2022), Stephen Curry in 2023, and Mardy Fish in 2024. The 54-hole, par 72 event offers a purse of \$750,000.

Over the years, the American Century Championship has become a premier destination for fans to engage with their favorite stars in a competitive yet entertaining setting. The tournament includes a Long Drive Challenge (16th hole), Charity Chip Challenge and a Hole-in-one contest on the 17th tee; the latter is sponsored by Korbel. The tournament supports charitable causes, contributing significantly throughout its history. Visit Lake Tahoe CEO Carol Chaplin spoke with Rock On about the popular tournament, which takes place this year July 9th-13th.

Tell me about your role in connection with the tournament.

Carol Chaplin: I've been president and CEO of the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority (LTVA) – or as we call ourselves these days, Visit Lake Tahoe – since 2008. I came in June of that year, so the first thing that I got hit with was a very active and vibrant event called the American Century Championship.

You started in June?! So it was “Welcome, and ‘boom.’”

Yes! But my staff have been doing this for a long time. We manage the volunteers, and we have 400 of them for the tournament that week. And many of them have been there, if not for every year, for close to all 35 years. NBC owns this tournament, and they have a wonderful tournament director. Milthorpe Sports LLC is the company that runs the tournament. LTVA is the destination sponsor; we have roles that we play, but we don't produce every aspect of it. There are lots of partners; it's just amazing to see how many people in the community are involved in this; they transplant themselves for a month before it happens.

It's often a challenge to get volunteers for events; getting them to come back again and again suggests that it's a very rewarding experience for them.

Oh, absolutely. A lot of these volunteers know each other from other tournaments; this is part of their social life. They're passionate about the sport, passionate about the players. They spend a week with us, and they find their own accommodations. Our staff hears from them year-round because they've become friends and acquaintances. They're something else: they know what they're doing and they know what hole they want to be on. They know what role they want to play. It's a great little community, and the volunteers really make that thing run.



Tell me about the origins of the tournament.

1990 was the first year; there were about 1,500 attendees that year. At that point in time, Caesar's Hotel was here; it originated with Caesar's, and the LTVA helped find rooms for the players and [tasks] like that. NBC purchased the tournament in the mid '90s, and American Century became the title sponsor in 1999. So they've both been with the tournament for a long time. American Century is an incredible company to work with; they're very passionate about what they do for nonprofits.

Back in 1990 it was just a little tournament with a few celebrities. And then it just grew from there; last year we had 77,000 people attend. We've had some incredible moments on the golf course that have echoed around the world, like Steph Curry's hole-in-one in '23.



What sets the American Century Championship apart from other golf tournaments?

The golf tournament takes place at our good partners Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course, considered one of the finest in the country. It sits right on the lake, so there are incredible views of stunning Lake Tahoe and the Sierra Nevadas in the background. A lot of golf tournaments have great scenery, but I'm not sure how many are in an Alpine setting like ours. So that might set us apart a little bit.

Then there's the fact that we have approximately 84 celebrities and athlete players every year. And there's this thing that happens on the golf course – especially on 17, which is right next to the lake – where we have spectators who line up on the beach in their boats. They wait for their favorite players to come along.

And there's strange stuff that happens. You might see Justin Timberlake throw a football into a basketball hoop. It gets pretty fun out on those final holes, coming in to 18 at the clubhouse. Golf etiquette is observed when it needs to be, but it is put aside in some cases when the players are having fun. And some of those players come back year after year themselves, just like the volunteers. They have friends on the course, and they really have a good time. It's a place where the players bring their families and have a little bit of a vacation as well.



What charities benefit from the event?

American Century has their own charities; they're very active in cancer research. Then every year after the tournament, the LTVA manages this pot of money that comes back to us. Each year it's anywhere from \$75,000 to \$125,000, for a total of over \$8 million over the life of the tournament. Beneficiaries include The Boys and Girls Clubs and Cancer League of South Lake Tahoe; some of our local schools get money. Most of the money goes to nonprofits that help some of our local underserved populations. And we've been able to donate things like a vehicle to get people to their treatments, and a walk-in cooler to help keep food fresh so that people can have fresh meals made for them.



Typically we're able to donate back to at least 25 to 30 nonprofits. American Century and the tournament are the reasons that we're able to do that. The tournament is one of those gifts that keeps on giving; we're always very appreciative and thankful for American Century helping us with that.

Beyond exponential growth, how has the tournament changed over the years?

At the beginning in 1990, obviously we didn't have the kind of media coverage we have now, so [from a technical standpoint] we couldn't do what we do today. We didn't have drones, we didn't have social media, and there were some limitations in term of television broadcasting. Of course now we're broadcasting globally. One reason that the tournament has grown so much is that we reach so many more people year after year. Online, we are numbering in the billions – as opposed to thousands – of impressions.

This tournament is a community within itself. The American Century team that comes in is the same people that I met in 2008. I'm still working with the same team, the same tournament director from NBC. We all know each other; we know what our families are doing. We've watched kids grow up. And the players have done that as well. We have NFL Hall of Famers, we have incredible stars from every different sport, we have TV stars. And they all have a relationship on the golf course that withstands the test of time.



What else would you like people to know about the tournament?

Tournament week is something that we all look forward to here in the community. There is a very different vibe in South Lake Tahoe. The community is really proud of this event and welcomes people to spend time with us. People enjoy walking into one of our hotel casinos and seeing one of the players dining or having fun. Harvey's Outdoor Concert Series is in full swing during that time period, so there's always a concert during the tournament, and a lot of the players go to that.

We have incredible local community partners in our hotels and restaurants. Harrah's is our host hotel for the event. Edgewood Tahoe is a great partner and provides the golf course; they turn it over to the tournament for that entire week. Bally's, Golden Nugget, Forest Suites and Azure Hotel are all our partners; they help provide rooms and accommodations for the team that comes in from NBC and some of the sponsors. Korbels is a big sponsor, too; they've come back every year.

It's fun to see how we all come together to make this a really special time of the year. There's nothing else like it for us here in South Lake Tahoe.



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ROCKOn MAGAZINE

Interview with **Matt Sorum** by Grady Holdridge & Gina Adams

True Fans of Rock n Roll will know this month's featured interview-ee. Matt Sorum was born on November 19th, 1960 and has more music industry experience and stories to share on his impressive journey than most people can dream of. He not only lived "The Dream" but survived to tell the story! His newly released Book "Double Talkin Jive" is a must read for any fan of The Cult, Guns n Roses, or Velvet Revolver (throw in Kings of Chaos and Y Kant Tory Read too). He is now an energetic 60 years old and is celebrating the birth of his first child who entered the World approximately 3 weeks prior to this interview. In his visit with Rock On Magazine, Sorum talks about the new Book, his new life with current projects, and shares some casual excerpts of stories from some of his life experiences as a bona fide Rock n Roll Star. This is what Matt had to say while holding his French Bulldog and talking with ROM:



We heard you have moved from L.A. to Palm Springs! How do you like it?

Well right now, it's a little toasty. We've lived here for about 4 years. When the Baby was coming, we decided to get out of the big city. Maybe thinking about getting a second home at Lake Tahoe. We love the Summers there. Palm Springs is cool, and we love it in the Winter and Spring. We just recorded a new Billy Gibbons (ZZ Top) record out here too.

Oh yes, we heard about the Recording, so can you tell us about that Project?

In Pioneer Town and Joshua Tree there are a lot of Musicians up there. I was working up at my friend's place (Christopher Thorn) who used to be in the Band Blind Melon, and of course Shannon Hoon who was a cohort of Axl's. So, I was working up at his studio, but there's another Studio up there called "Escape" near Pioneer Town (Pappy and Harriet's area) on 140 acres, 2 Studios, 4 Houses and a bunch of Airstream trailers. I talked Billy into coming out there last Summer in July. We made the record in the middle of nowhere and shot 4 videos, super low budget and stripped down. We worked really hard coming up with the best songs, and I think we came up with a really cool record. It came out and was a Top 20 Record in England and #1 in a couple of Countries in Europe, and it's doing really well.

We want to hit on your Book "Double Talkin Jive" and it is an amazingly fun read. You have met so many people and jammed with so many amazing artists. How does that make you feel?

Obviously when you write a Book, not to sound like a name dropper, but it's hard to tell the stories when you've had all these experiences I have had. People would always say "Oh my God you have some amazing stories, you should write a book", and with me for some reason I was like Rain Man. I could just remember everything down to the details; I guess being a drummer, I was just always detail oriented. When we got into the Cult stuff and me and Ian (Astbury) almost get arrested by the Fire Marshall, I mean, I can remember the Room number; it was room 626 because I remember thinking "Oh my God, we're only four doors down from the Devil". I remember it was Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and it was over 30 years ago. So, when I remember the characters in my life, it was such pinnacle moments, and I used to say to people when I was partying hard "Well, it's going to be good for the book".

This is in your Book but let our readers in on what led to you becoming the Drummer for Guns n Roses, and... the first time you met Axl Rose?

The first time I met Axl was when I was in NYC, and I was playing with The Cult. There is a segment in the Book explaining about a famous Rock n Roll Hotel in New York right outside Central Park called “The Mayflower”.

All the Bands used to stay there, and The Cult liked the Hotel. I remember when I first walked into the Hotel, I saw Sean Penn and Robert DeNiro. I went up the elevator, and the guy who brought my bags to my room said, “Is there anything else you need”? (Wink, Wink, like drugs, alcohol). It was that kind of Hotel!! I then went downstairs to the Bar, and there was Nick Nolte and Christopher Walken. I sat down at the bar in between Ian Astbury and Christopher Walken who asked, “Where you guys going”? After we said, “we’re going Downtown to the East Village”, that’s when Ian announced that Axl Rose and Izzy Stradlin were going to come pick us up. Before I left The Cult, we were the Headliner and Guns n Roses was the Opening Act. Ian was the one responsible for giving Axl his headband look and had rapport with him long before I did.

Christopher Walken asked, “Can I hitch a ride”? So, this Limo pulls up in the front of the Hotel and there was Axl and Izzy. We end up jumping into the Limo and get into this conversation about Axl funding and supporting these Nicaraguan Guerillas in their plight against their government, and I thought that was just so eclectic and cool. I just remember the imagery of it all.... there’s Christopher Walken just being Christopher Walken (laughter). We then drove down to the East Village to the “Scrap Bar”. Went down there and drank until that place closed, and then ended it up at a place called “The Loft”. I found Ian later laying besides a trash can. I said “Hey, we have a photo shoot this morning at Central Park”!!



Who was the first person who brought up the notion of you becoming G & R's Drummer?

The Cult was finishing up a Tour and Shows in L.A. and Slash and Axl showed up. They get out of a limo that made me think of scenes in Fast Times at Ridgemont High. These guys were the epitome of Rock n Roll; it looked fabricated but was One hundred percent real. At the time, joking to my girlfriend I said, “Those guys look like fun, maybe I can play with them”. Fast forward a month or two later, I get a call from Mike Clink (who produced a lot of big records (Whitesnake, Triumph, Guns n Roses, Motley Crue, MegaDeath, UFO, Jefferson Starship, The Baby’s, Eddie Money, many more) and he says, “I got your number from Lars Ulrich, and I’m not going to tell you who’s calling, but somebody is going to be calling you in a minute”. Not long after that Slash called me, and Mom said something like “Slush is on the phone” (more Laughter).

When Slash and Duff (McKagen) came to see me, the conversations were about playing on their recordings, but shortly thereafter I was put up in a Hollywood apartment. I walked in and started playing with Slash, Duff, & Izzy and it was awesome! In those days the pressure to come up with the second album was huge because bands needed to come up with an album every year, and if you didn't you were in trouble.

"Double Talkin' Jive" is written about your heyday and all the amazing stories. Besides the obvious answer of your Family, since you aren't the Party Animal you were before, what is the one thing that now motivates Matt Sorum every day?

I've always been the guy who wakes up and takes it one day at a time. I can't really say I had a "plan" for that particular time in my life; I just wanted to be in a Rock Band and play Rock n Roll. With that type of mindset, you just go after things because you have nothing to lose. I still have the kind of mindset going into my life, except now I have a family, I'm Married and have a Baby, and everything changes. I still feel like going out and being creative, trying to do good things. My life in the Book lays out that I've had a lot of ups and downs, but I always fall into something incredible; my Bucket List is "pretty full". I've played with some of the greatest in the business from Steven Tyler, Lemmy, Alice Cooper, etc. I've lived the Rock n Roll dream!! I've taken all that experience and it has opened other doors for me. Now I'm doing things as an Entrepreneur, I've got a couple Charities going. Guns n Roses opened a lot of doors for me because if people want to be around a creative environment, I can give wisdom in other ways.

Who is your Hero now, who do you look up to?

Right now I'm in Baby World!! I can't even think right now, this has been 60 years in the making! There are heroes to me in other aspects of the World for sure. Guys like Ric O'Barry behind the Dolphin Project and Jill Robinson with Animals Asia Foundation. There are a lot of things out there, and as you get older different ideas come, and I like that. Lars is a good friend of mine, and Metallica is one of those bands that gives back.





Switching gears, you have a new Beer coming out called "Drummer Beer"? Can you tell us about that?

Sometimes I work with people who I met who are a "Fan" of mine. I was doing some stuff in Brazil, and someone wrote something about me doing a Beer. The beer is in Brazil, and we are launching in August here in America. It's already out (released) in Brazil, but those are the type of things you'll see me doing in the near future.

Matt as you leave the Stage what are your parting words?

Are you talking about my final bow? Well, I definitely have more to do, but I don't know....

"I came and lived the Dream; I felt the rush and it's been a beautiful life. I've grabbed every piece that I could and there's more to come, I hope".

Matt wanted to let everyone know to check out his Audio Book coming out on Vinyl) and can get it on: *Rare Bird* or *ExperienceVinyl.com*

For information on the Dolphin Project go to:
www.dolphinproject.com

For information on the Animals Asian Foundation go to:
www.animalsasia.org

Read more about Matt Sorum, music, videos, studio, news and upcoming tours.
www.mattsorum.com

Former GUNS N' ROSES / VELVET REVOLVER Drummer MATT SORUM's Double Talkin' Jive Book And Vinyl Signed Ltd Ed Preorder Available Now – *BraveWords*



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APRIL

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MAY

Cinco de Mayo Festival

JUNE

Reno River Festival

Street Vibrations Spring Rally

Great El Dorado BBQ, Brews &
Blues

Reno Rodeo

Carson Valley Days

JULY

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American Century Celebrity Golf
Tournament

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Boat Festival

Burning Man Festival

SEPTEMBER

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Cook-Off

Virginia City International
Camel Races

Great Reno Balloon Races

Street Vibrations Fall Rally

Genoa Candy Dance Faire

OCTOBER

Great Italian Festival

Nevada Day Celebration
and Parade

NOVEMBER

Crafts for Christmas

DECEMBER

Reno Santa Pub Crawl

Sparks Hometown

Christmas

Christmas on the Comstock

39 North Pole Village

FOREVER GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Val Edward Kilmer

December 31, 1959 – April 1, 2025

Val Edward Kilmer was an American actor. Initially a stage actor, he later found fame as a leading man in films in a wide variety of genres. Kilmer started his film career in the comedy films *Top Secret!* (1984) and *Real Genius* (1985), before transitioning to dramatic films. He rose to prominence for playing Iceman in *Top Gun* (1986), Jim Morrison in *The Doors* (1991), Doc Holliday in *Tombstone* (1993), and Batman / Bruce Wayne in *Batman Forever* (1995). He also gained acclaim for his roles in *Willow* (1988), *Thunderheart* (1992), *True Romance* (1993) and *Heat* (1995).



Eugene Allen Hackman

January 30, 1930 – February 18, 2025

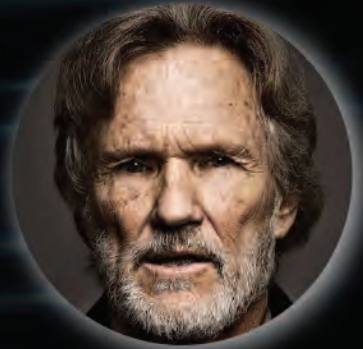
Eugene Allen Hackman was an American actor. Hackman made his credited film debut in the drama *Lilith* (1964). He later won two Academy Awards, his first for Best Actor for his role as Jimmy "Popeye" Doyle in William Friedkin's action thriller *The French Connection* (1971) and his second for Best Supporting Actor for playing a villainous sheriff in Clint Eastwood's Western *Unforgiven* (1992).



Kris Kristofferson

June 22, 1936 – September 28, 2024

An American singer, songwriter, and actor. He was a pioneering figure in the outlaw country movement of the 1970s, moving away from the polished Nashville sound and toward a more raw, introspective style. During the 1970s, he also embarked on a successful career as a Hollywood actor.



Shannen Maria Doherty

April 12, 1971 – July 13, 2024

An American actress. During her career in film and television, Doherty played a number of notable characters, including Jenny Wilder in *Little House on the Prairie* (1982–1983); Maggie Malene in *Girls Just Want to Have Fun* (1985); Kris Witherspoon in *Our House* (1986–1988); Heather Duke in *Heathers* (1989); Brenda Walsh in *Beverly Hills, 90210* (1990–1994), *90210* (2008–2009), and *BH90210* (2019); Rene Mosier in *Mallrats* (1995); and Prue Halliwell in *Charmed* (1998–2001).



James Earl Jones

January 17, 1931 – September 9, 2024

An American actor. A pioneer for black actors in the entertainment industry, he is known for his extensive and acclaimed roles on stage and screen. Jones is one of the few performers to achieve the EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and Tony). He was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame in 1985, and was honored with the National Medal of Arts in 1992, the Kennedy Center Honor in 2002, the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award in 2009, and the Academy Honorary Award in 2011.



Shelley Alexis Duvall

July 7, 1949 – July 11, 2024

An American actress and producer. Known for her collaborations with Robert Altman and for playing eccentric characters, she won a Cannes Film Festival Award and was nominated for a British Academy Film Award and two Emmy Awards. Four of her films are preserved in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress.

Phillip John Donahue

December 21, 1935 – August 18, 2024

An American media personality, writer, film producer, and the creator and host of The Phil Donahue Show. The television program, later known simply as Donahue, was the first popular talk show to feature a format that included audience participation.[1] The show had a 29-year run on national television that began in Dayton, Ohio, in 1967 and ended in New York City in 1996.



Liam James Payne

August 29, 1993 – October 16, 2024

An English singer and songwriter. He was a member of the English-Irish pop band One Direction, one of the best-selling boy bands of all time, alongside Niall Horan, Zayn Malik, Harry Styles, and Louis Tomlinson. Payne twice appeared as a solo auditionee on the British television series The X Factor in 2008 and 2010; in the latter, he was invited to join One Direction alongside fellow contestants, placing third and later achieving global success.

Fernando Valenzuela Anguamea

November 1, 1960 – October 22, 2024

nicknamed "El Toro", was a Mexican professional baseball pitcher. Valenzuela played 17 Major League Baseball (MLB) seasons, from 1980 to 1997 (except for a one-year sabbatical in Mexico in 1992). He played for six MLB teams, most prominently with the Los Angeles Dodgers, who signed him in 1979 and gave him his MLB debut in 1980. Valenzuela batted and threw left-handed, with an unorthodox windup. He was one of a small number of pitchers who regularly threw a screwball in the modern era.





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