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## PEACH BUZZ: Country queen rules fans' hearts

By Richard L. Eldredge  
 The Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
 Monday, August 25, 2008

A few songs into her set Saturday night at the Cobb Energy Centre, country legend Loretta Lynn confessed to the capacity crowd: "I don't know if I did all of that song or not! It's my age."

In the back of the theater a fan yelled out to her: "It don't matter, Loretta. We love you!"

In a shimmering pink-hued gown ("She looks like Glenda the Good Witch," whispered one attendee), Lynn, 73, replied: "I love you too, sweetheart."

For about 70 minutes, whether she was sitting or standing and whether she sang all the verses to her extensive country catalog or not, the decades-long love affair continued between the performer and her loyal fans.

In the parking garage, one supporter even painted their car windows with a "Hey Loretta!" salutation to the singer.

And while Lynn performed all of her biggest hits for the crowd, she also dug deep into her songbook and delighted fans with fresh renditions of "When the Tingle Becomes a Chill," her classic duets with Conway Twitty, including "Feelins'" and "Louisiana Woman, Mississippi Man" and her gospel hit "If God is Dead (Who's This Living in My Soul)."

When she belted out "How Great Thou Art" a cappella, the singer received her first standing ovation.

She even cleverly combined two of her biggest 1970s hits into a medley: "One's on the Way," her ode to exhausted mothers everywhere, and "The Pill," her pro-birth control ditty that once got her banned from country radio.

Tugging on her dress and calling for a chair, Lynn instantly endeared herself to the audience when she told them: "I ate five big pieces of peanut butter fudge before I come out here tonight. I oughta have my head examined. ... I'm too dang full to stand up."

Reflecting on her life with her late husband and muse, Doo Lynn, country's reigning queen said: "He's been gone 12 years now. But he gave me a lot to write about. Where do you think I got all those songs from? That was the one way I had to tell ole Doo off!"

Planet Mutombo

If you ever need your faith restored in professional athletes, Buzz heartily recommends a Merlin's Planet Living smoothie with former Atlanta Hawk Dikembe Mutombo. The 7-foot, 2-inch Atlantan greeted fans Saturday at the grand opening of his latest business venture, the Planet Smoothie at Ansley Mall in Midtown.

"I made mistakes earlier in business when my hands were far away," Mutombo told us. "I've learned to keep my hands closer to the business now."

The businessman also has Smoothie locations set for Vinings and Dunwoody.

Mutombo even has his kids drinking down his favorite Merlin's beverage since it comes chock-full of two fruits and a protein packet.

The basketball player, clad in a dress shirt and pants and flanked by two bottles of Gatorade, happily posed for pictures with fans and graciously urged two visiting neighbors to "ring the doorbell the next time."

Eyeing the line of kids waiting out on the sidewalk with their Atlanta [Hawks](#) jerseys for him to sign, the current Houston Rockets center smiled and told us: "I'm having flashbacks of Phillips Arena. It is wonderful to see the people who have loved you and appreciated you. It is a gift I can give back."

As for whether the 19-year pro has one more season in him or not, Mutombo, 42, said: "I'm going back and forth about it. I think about it every day when I go to the gym. It's all about how my body is responding. We'll have to see."

No post-'Idol' fade for busy Fantasia

Fantasia has carved out a successful post-"Idol" career since she won in 2004. Sure, she doesn't have an Oscar like Jennifer Hudson or the chart success of Carrie Underwood. But she's had two hit albums, a Lifetime biopic, a best-selling book and an acclaimed stint on "The Color Purple" on Broadway.

On Saturday night co-headlining a show with comic Rickey Smiley at the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center, she proved what made her so appealing to a broad audience on TV. While she'd revert to "screech" mode on her vocals on occasion, the inspired, energetic Fantasia turned the center into her very own church, capped by a tour de force version of "Free Yourself."

And showing how connected she was with the audience, she spent almost as much time in the crowd as she did on the stage. She danced and laughed it up with the folks in the first few rows, who got their \$94 worth. She even evoked a bit of "Idol" by doing a medley of old classics including "Tell Me Something Good" and a rousing "Purple

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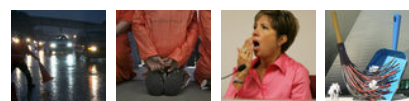
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Top five songs, week of Aug. 18

1. "Inside the Fire" Disturbed
2. "Psycho" Puddle of Mudd
3. "Addicted" Saving Abel
4. "It's Not My Time" 3 Doors Down
5. "Life is Beautiful" Sixx: A.M.

— Yes.com

CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS

Game show host Monty Hall is 87. Actor Sean Connery (right) is 78. Talk show host Regis Philbin is 77. Gene Simmons of Kiss is 59. Singer Rob Halford of Judas Priest is 57. Musician Elvis Costello is 54. Director Tim Burton is 50. Country singer Billy Ray Cyrus is 47. TV chef Rachael Ray is 40. Actress Rachel Bilson ("The O.C.") is 27.

— Contributing: Rodney Ho and news services

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