

Dawn D. Harkins
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Dawn Harkins, of Saint Charles, Illinois, is a singer, musician, teacher, actor and cabaret artist, as well as a wife and mother. Her second album, "This Is Romance," will be launched September 22 and 23, 2011. It was recorded, mixed and mastered in Chicago, in collaboration with Chicago Jazz pianist Bobby Schiff.

The public is invited to attend her two CD release performances, with full rhythm section and woodwind instruments, planned for:

Thursday, September 22, 2011

6:30-9:30 pm at Villa Verone Upper Club, 416 Hamilton Street, Geneva, Illinois, 630-232-2201

Friday, September 23, 2011

6:30-9:30 pm in the Harvest Lounge at Pheasant Run Resort, Saint Charles, Illinois, 630-524-5080

Reservations are not required. No cover or drink minimum.

Background:

Dawn Harkins grew up in Washington, Illinois, just outside of Peoria, and graduated from Washington Community High School. Her father, Glenn Harkins and brothers, Jason and Ryan, still reside in Washington.

Harkins went to Western Illinois University in Macomb, and in the summer of 1988, she toured the US and Japan with the Decatur Park Singers. She also performed the lead role in "The Sound of Music" for WIU's Summer Musical Theatre program.

Harkins moved to St. Charles, Illinois and, at the age of 24, was diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma. After six months of chemotherapy and six weeks of radiation therapy, she went into remission, where she has remained since. While undergoing treatment she started searching for the college/university where she could finish her Bachelor of Arts degree. She decided on Judson College in Elgin, receiving her BA in Music Performance in 1997.

Following graduation she began teaching private voice lessons in Saint Charles, while working for the Illinois Chamber Symphony. She has performed, taught and vocal directed throughout the Chicagoland area. Harkins also served as box office manager at Norris Cultural Arts Center and Pheasant Run Resort's Dinner Theatre, Saint Charles, and Paramount Theatre, Aurora.

In addition to performing various musical theatre roles throughout the Fox Valley area, Harkins has sung with Elgin Choral Union and Arts Chorale, DuPage Opera, Heartland Voices of Elgin and Saint Charles Singers. She works with Rising Star Theatreworks, Geneva, vocal directing two productions per year and teaching the occasional musical theatre course for young performers.

Harkins acted and sang professionally, full time, at American Girl Theatre in Chicago from 2006-2008. Her husband, Dennis Brown, originally from London, proposed to her on stage at the American Girl Theatre, and they were married in 2008.

She continues to teach private voice and piano lessons and began work on her first cabaret, "Dawn of a New Day!" shortly after the birth of her fourth son. Song by song, through the lyrics of the cabaret the story of her life unfolds. She premiered the cabaret at Davenport's Cabaret in Chicago, May, 2009, and began recording her first album based on those performances.

"Dawn of a New Day!" was released February, 2010, and was featured in its entirety on KPOV FM radio's "Curtain Call" with Patty Davis, along with an interview.

Even with an already full schedule, Harkins so enjoyed the process of creating both the cabaret and her first album, that she began researching material for a second project of this type. Inspired by one of the songs on the first album, "I Double Dare You," she looked for more music written by the same composers, Terry Shand and Jimmy Eaton.

She not only came across another great tune of theirs, "Cry, Baby, Cry," but discovered a wealth of material from the same era, the 1930's, just waiting to be performed. With this material in hand, she began a collaboration with Jazz pianist, Bobby Schiff of Chicago, who did brand new arrangements for horns and strings for many of these tunes. From this collaboration came her second album, "This Is Romance."