

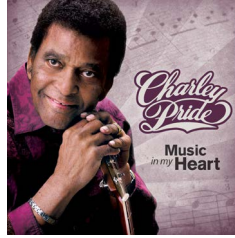
Becoming a trailblazing Country Music superstar was an improbable destiny for Charley Pride, especially considering his humble beginnings as a sharecropper's son on a cotton farm in Sledge, Mississippi. His unique journey to the top of the music charts includes a tumultuous detour through the world of Negro league, minor league and semi-pro baseball as well as many long years of labor alongside the volcanic fires of a smelter. But in the end, with boldness, perseverance and undeniable musical talent, he managed to parlay a series of fortuitous encounters with Nashville insiders into an amazing legacy of hit singles and tens of millions in record sales.

Growing up, Charley was exposed primarily to Blues, Gospel and Country music. His father inadvertently fostered Charley's love of Country music by tuning the family's Philco radio to Nashville's WSM-AM in order to catch Grand Ole Opry broadcasts. At 14 years of age, Charley purchased his first guitar (a Silvertone) from a Sears Roebuck catalog and taught himself how to play it by listening to the songs that he heard on that radio.

In 1965, Chet Atkins signed Pride to RCA Records and then oversaw a promotional campaign that addressed the racial challenges of mid-1960s America.

Charley Pride

What happened next is Country Music history. Charley scored his first Top-10 Country single with "Just Between You And Me" in early 1967, paving the way for him to become Country Music's first Black superstar. Between 1967 and 1987, he amassed no fewer than 52 Top-10 Country hits and went on to sell tens of millions of records worldwide. In 1971, Charley won two Grammy Awards related to his Gospel album DID YOU THINK TO PRAY ('Best Sacred Performance, Musical (Non-Classical)' for the album, as well as 'Best Gospel Performance Other Than Soul' for the single 'Let Me Live.' Later that year, his #1 crossover hit 'Kiss An Angel Good Mornin' sold over a million singles and helped him to win the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year award and the 'Top Male Vocalist' awards of 1971 and 1972. It also brought him a 'Best Male Country Vocal Performance' Grammy Award in 1972. Some of Charley's unforgettable hits from his 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s output include 'All I Have To Offer You Is Me,' 'Is Anybody Goin' To San Antone,' 'Amazing Love,' 'Mississippi Cotton Pickin' Delta Town,' 'Burgers And Fries,' 'Roll On Mississippi' and 'Mountain Of Love.'



Latest Album:
Music In My Heart

Career Highlights:

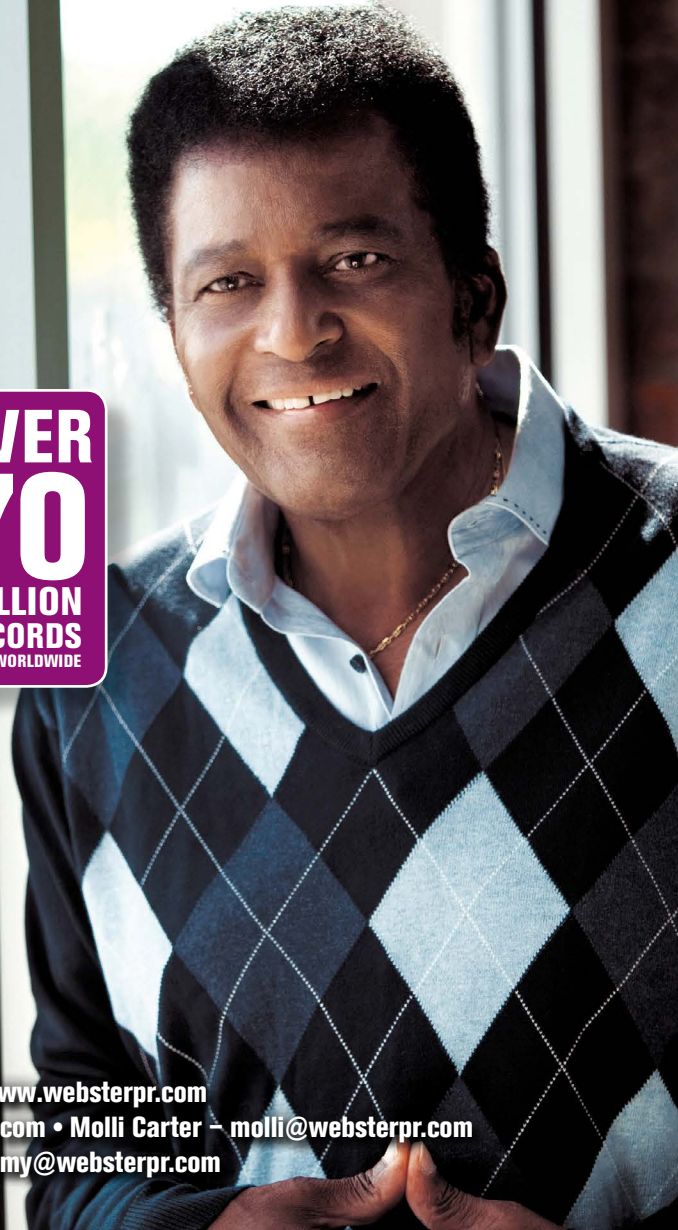
- ◆ Recorded 36 No. 1 Country hits, along with multiple Platinum and Gold certified albums
- ◆ Inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2000
- ◆ Inducted into the Grand Ole Opry in 1993
- ◆ Received star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame in 1999
- ◆ Served in the United States Army
- ◆ Country Music's first black superstar
- ◆ Presented President Jimmy Carter with a special award for his support of country music, alongside Willie Nelson
- ◆ From 1952 through 1958, played baseball for Negro American League teams including the Louisville Clippers, Birmingham Black Barons and Memphis Red Sox. Also enjoyed stints on minor-league teams such as the Fond du Lac Panthers, El Paso Kings,

- ◆ Missoula Timberjacks and Boise Yankees during his baseball career.
- ◆ Pitched, as a Negro American League All-Star player in 1956, against a group of major league players that included Willie Mays, Hank Aaron, Al Smith, Gene Baker and Ernie Banks. Also played in games with Warren Spahn, Lew Burdette, Monte Irvin, Elston Howard, Willie Kirkland and George Altman over the course of his baseball career.
- ◆ Performed for President Barack Obama and guests in the historic East Room of the White House in 2009 as part of a concert and educational workshop event that also featured Brad Paisley and Alison Krauss
- ◆ Became one of the owners of the Texas Rangers Major League Baseball team in 2010

Awards:

- ◆ Honored in 2017 with the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award
- ◆ Three-time Grammy Award winner, including "Best Male Country Vocal Performance" in 1972.
- ◆ Three-time CMA winner, including "Entertainer of the Year" in 1971
- ◆ Received the ACM "Pioneer Award" in 1994
- ◆ Winner of three American Music Awards
- ◆ Ranked 18th on CMT's 40 Greatest Men in Country Music
- ◆ Recipient of the "Living Legend" awards by TNN / Music City News
- ◆ Trumpet Award for "Outstanding African-American Achievement" in 1996
- ◆ Cashbox award for "Top Male Country Artist of the Decade" for the 1970's

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