

# RECKLESS KELLY

↓ WAS HERE ↓

## 10 RECKLESS YEARS



by: Deric Garza

Reckless Kelly can be defined just like many other Texas Country-esque acts would be. Some would say they're a mix of country and [insert genre], which seems to be a pretty standard mixture recipe for Texas/Americana cocktails. But Reckless likes to add something else into their recipe... fun.

Case in point: RKTV. Which, of course, stands for Reckless Kelly TV. RKTV is a set of different short videos members of the band have put together for your viewing pleasure. The brainchildren behind RKTV are Willy, David Abeyta (lead guitarist), and friend to the band, Bryan Shaw.

"Bryan went to film school and his dad was the piano player in the Buck Owens band so he grew up on the set of Hee-Haw," explains Cody, "So, those guys sort of came up with those goofy things and started putting them on [the Web site]. It's a good way for the band to do some fun stuff and the audience gets to see we're just as goofy as anyone else. They get to know we're just having a good time."

But even amidst all the fun, Reckless Kelly has been able to avoid becoming nitch artists. And, you can credit that and their popularity to the balance of their songwriting.

"We've always tried to have a couple fun songs on the records that are fun for us as well as the crowd and something that kind of pushes the envelope and are on the edge of being able to be played on the radio. We'd like to be known for our serious songs just as much as our fun songs," Cody said.

Another one of Reckless' hobbies, outside of trying to become movie moguls, is watching baseball. And, fortunately for them, they've gotten to sing the National Anthem at a couple of Houston Astros games, including one where the Astros were hosting the San Diego Padres. Some of the players from the Padres were fans of Reckless Kelly and invited them in for a tour of the clubhouse, which later turned into a clubhouse prank by buck-naked right fielder, Brian Giles. And just incase you Texan baseball fans want to give Cody Braun grief, he's a Yankees fan, but he quickly redeemed himself by telling me his number two team is the Astros.

"I grew up in Idaho and we didn't have a team so my dad was a Yankees fan, so I grew up being a Yankees fan...it's been tough here in Texas," he joked.

This year, Reckless Kelly turns 10 years old. And in honor of that, they have a gift for the fans. On March 31 of this year, they packed La Zona Rosa in Austin to record their live CD/DVD entitled *Reckless Kelly Was Here*. Released earlier this month, the package includes the 3 disks (2 Audio, 1 DVD) produced by the band's own Cody Braun and David Abeyta and mixed by Grammy Award Winner Elliot Scheiner. The live CD/DVD is a milestone for the band, chronicling their 10-year musical journey that no Reckless fan should be without. And if you're not yet a reckless fan, what better way to become one? **DG**



**It's** a hard thing for me to swallow: Watching "Country Superstar" Trace Adkins sing our Nation's Anthem before Game 3 of the 2006 World Series. Something tells me if you were to travel this very night out west all the way to Tucson, Arizona, you would find a guy getting ready to play a show tonight who probably feels the same way I do. His name is Cody Braun; his band is Reckless Kelly.

"As far as trying to come up with the next 'Honky Tonk Badonkadonk, it ain't gonna happen," shares Braun on the subject of "keeping up with the Jones'" in the music industry. We share conversation over a plate of Best Wurst and drinks at the Gristmill Bar just steps away from Gruene Hall, where Reckless Kelly will later take the stage. "... we're not *that* competitive". Not "that" competitive, but patient and determined.

It's been 10 years since Cody and brother Willy Braun began they're own musical journey. Originally from Idaho, music was nothing new to them. According to their Sugar Hill Record's press release, "[They] grew up touring and playing with their father's band, Muzzie Braun and the Boys, all across the Big Sky country of Montana and Idaho. They opened for the likes of Merle Haggard, played the Grand Ole Opry and even appeared twice on *The Tonight Show* in the Johnny Carson Era."

But in 1996 the brothers set sights on Oregon to start the first version of Reckless Kelly, who were then billed as The Prairie Mutts. "We had met some guys we were interested in playing with and we had a manager who was helping put it all together," Cody commented, on what drew the brothers to Oregon.

But their time in Oregon wasn't all fun and games. Cody recalls the cold apartment they lived in, where no one was allowed to touch the thermostat no matter how bitter cold it became. And when it was time for them to get jobs, somehow all heads turned toward Cody, and out into the real world he went.

He tells me a story about a time he worked at a seafood house. At closing time, they would allow him to take home the left over clam chowder. He would carry it in buckets and ride his bike back to the apartment, where he says the boys would already be sitting at the table with spoons in hand waiting for him to get home so they could all eat. Obviously, the experience had an impact on him. After a text message request to publish the clam chowder story, he replied, "Go ahead. Just make it clear that I was the one with the job."

After a nine-month stint in Oregon, the brothers decided that Austin would prove to be more suitable headquarters. "When we started the band we were listening to a lot of Texas music like Billy Joe Shaver, Stephen Bruton, and Robert Earl Keen. It just felt like what we were wanting to do with the band would fit in a lot better [in Texas] than it would any where else up [in Oregon]," he said. "The smaller rodeo towns are cool up there but Portland, Seattle ... any of the bigger cities were still kinda in the grunge scene...they didn't want to listen to country at all."

As I began my research for this article, I did what I normally do, Google the artist and see what pops up. So when I Googled "Reckless Kelly" something came up that I wasn't expecting. It was a link to imdb.com for a film titled "Reckless Kelly." Continuing my journey, I found it was a satirical film about a man named Ned Kelly who I went on to learn was the original Reckless Kelly, an Australian outlaw in the late 1800s. The real Reckless Kelly was eventually captured, shot 25 times (or 6 depending on which historical depiction you read), survived, stood trial, and was hanged. So how did the Braun brothers come to decide on Reckless Kelly on their new band moniker?

"It was kind of a fluke, really," Cody answers. "We heard about Reckless Kelly somewhere in school, and had written it down on a list of names that we were thinking about for the band. We thought he was a Chicago gangster or something, but after we named the band we started to find out who he was."



Catch the band at one of these upcoming Texas dates & visit [www.RecklessKelly.com](http://www.RecklessKelly.com) for more

11/15 - Huntsville, TX - Shenanigans

11/16 - Austin, TX - Stubbs BBQ

11/18 - Odessa, TX - Dos Amigos

11/30 - Denton, TX - Rockin' Rodeo - TX

12/08 - New Braunfels, TX - Gruene Hall

12/09 - Stephenville, TX - Bostock's

12/13 - Bryan, TX - Texas Hall of Fame

12/14 - Nacogdoches, TX - The Annex

12/15 - Webster, TX - Big Tx. Dance Hall

12/30 - Dallas, TX - Gilley's

12/31 - NEW YEARS EVE BASH!

Austin, TX - Austin Music Hall